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ANNA KATHARINE GREEN

INTERNATIONAL SHORT STORIES

COMPILED BY
FRANCIS J. REYNOLDS

AMERICAN

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THE PROPHETIC PICTURES[1]

By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

"BUT this painter!" cried Walter Ludlow, with animation. "He not only excels in his peculiar art, but possesses vast acquirements in all other learning and science. He talks Hebrew with Dr. Mather, and gives lectures in anatomy to Dr. Boylston. In a word, he will meet the best instructed man among us, on his own ground. Moreover, he is a polished gentleman—a citizen of the world—yes, a true cosmopolite; for he will speak like a native of each clime and country on the globe, except our own forests, whither he is now going. Nor is all this what I most admire in him."

"Indeed!" said Elinor, who had listened with a woman's interest to the description of such a man. "Yet this is admirable enough."

"Surely it is," replied her lover, "but far less so than his natural gift of adapting himself to every variety of character, insomuch that all men—and all women too, Elinor—shall find a mirror of themselves in this wonderful painter. But the greatest wonder is yet to be told."

"Nay, if he have more wonderful attributes than these," said Elinor, laughing, "Boston is a perilous abode for the poor gentleman. Are you telling me of a painter, or a wizard?"

"In truth," answered he, "that question might be asked much more seriously than you suppose. They say that he paints not merely a man's features, but his mind and heart. He catches the secret sentiments and passions, and throws them upon the canvas, like sunshine—or perhaps, in the portraits of dark-souled men, like a gleam of infernal fire. It is an awful gift," added Walter, lowering his voice from its

[1] This story was suggested by an anecdote of Stuart, related in Dunlap's "History of the Arts of Design"—a most entertaining book to the general reader, and a deeply interesting one, we should think, to the artist.

tone of enthusiasm. "I shall be almost afraid to sit to him."

"Walter, are you in earnest?" exclaimed Elinor.

"For Heaven's sake, dearest Elinor, do not let him paint the look which you now wear," said her lover, smiling, though rather perplexed. "There: it is passing away now but when you spoke you seemed frightened to death, and very sad besides. What were you thinking of?"

"Nothing, nothing," answered Elinor, hastily. "You paint my face with your own fantasies. Well, come for me to-morrow, and we will visit this wonderful artist."

But when the young man had departed, it cannot be denied that a remarkable expression was again visible on the fair and youthful face of his mistress. It was a sad and anxious look, little in accordance with what should have been the feelings of a maiden on the eve of wedlock. Yet Walter Ludlow was the chosen of her heart.

"A look!" said Elinor to herself. "No wonder that it startled him, if it expressed what I sometimes feel. I know, by my own experience, how frightful a look may be. But it was all fancy. I thought nothing of it at the time—I have seen nothing of it since—I did but dream it."

And she busied herself about the embroidery of a ruff, in which she meant that her portrait should be taken.

The painter of whom they had been speaking was not one of those native artists who, at a later period than this, borrowed their colors from the Indians, and manufactured their pencils of the furs of wild beasts. Perhaps, if he could have revoked his life and prearranged his destiny, he might have chosen to belong to that school without a master, in the hope of being at least original, since there were no works of art to imitate, nor rules to follow. But he had been born and educated in Europe. People said that he had studied the grandeur or beauty of conception, and every touch of the master-hand, in all the most famous pictures, in cabinets and galleries, and on the walls of churches, till there was nothing more for his powerful mind to learn. Art could add nothing to its lessons, but Nature might. He had therefore visited a world whither none of his professional brethren had preceded him, to feast his eyes on visible images that

were noble and picturesque, yet had never been transferred to canvas. America was too poor to afford other temptations to an artist of eminence, though many of the colonial gentry, on the painter's arrival, had expressed a wish to transmit their lineaments to posterity by means of his skill. Whenever such proposals were made, he fixed his piercing eyes on the applicant, and seemed to look him through and through. If he beheld only a sleek and comfortable visage, though there were a gold-laced coat to adorn the picture, and golden guineas to pay for it, he civilly rejected the task and the reward. But if the face were the index of anything uncommon, in thought, sentiment, or experience; or if he met a beggar in the street, with a white beard and a furrowed brow; or if sometimes a child happened to look up and smile; he would exhaust all the art on them that he denied to wealth.

Pictorial skill being so rare in the colonies, the painter became an object of general curiosity. If few or none could appreciate the technical merit of his productions, yet there were points in regard to which the opinion of the crowd was as valuable as the refined judgment of the amateur. He watched the effect that each picture produced on such untutored beholders, and derived profit from their remarks, while they would as soon have thought of instructing Nature herself as him who seemed to rival her. Their admiration, it must be owned, was tinctured with the prejudices of the age and country. Some deemed it an offence against the Mosaic law, and even a presumptuous mockery of the Creator, to bring into existence such lively images of His creatures. Others, frightened at the art which could raise phantoms at will, and keep the form of the dead among the living, were inclined to consider the painter as a magician, or perhaps the famous Black Man, of old witch-times, plotting mischief in a new guise. These foolish fancies were more than half believed among the mob. Even in superior circles, his character was invested with a vague awe, partly rising like smoke-wreaths from the popular superstitions, but chiefly caused by the varied knowledge and talents which he made subservient to his profession.

Being on the eve of marriage, Walter Ludlow and Elinor

were eager to obtain their portraits, as the first of what, they doubtless hoped, would be a long series of family pictures. The day after the conversation above recorded, they visited the painter's rooms. A servant ushered them into an apartment, where, though the artist himself was not visible, there were personages whom they could hardly forbear greeting with reverence. They knew, indeed, that the whole assembly were but pictures, yet felt it impossible to separate the idea of life and intellect from such striking counterfeits. Several of the portraits were known to them, either as distinguished characters of the day, or their private acquaintances. There was Governor Burnet, looking as if he had just received an undutiful communication from the House of Representatives, and were inditing a most sharp response. Mr. Cooke hung beside the ruler whom he opposed, sturdy, and somewhat puritanical, as befitted a popular leader. The ancient lady of Sir William Phips eyed them from the wall, in ruff and farthingale, an imperious old dame, not unsuspected of witchcraft. John Winslow, then a very young man, wore the expression of warlike enterprise which long afterward made him a distinguished general. Their personal friends were recognized at a glance. In most of the pictures, the whole mind and character were brought out on the countenance, and concentrated into a single look, so that, to speak paradoxically, the originals hardly resembled themselves so strikingly as the portraits did.

Among these modern worthies, there were two old bearded saints, who had almost vanished into the darkening canvas. There was also a pale but unfaded Madonna, who had perhaps been worshiped in Rome, and now regarded the lovers with such a mild and holy look that they longed to worship too.

"How singular a thought," observed Walter Ludlow, "that this beautiful face has been beautiful for above two hundred years! Oh, if all beauty would endure so well! Do you not envy her, Elinor?"

"If earth were heaven, I might," she replied. "But where all things fade, how miserable to be one that could not fade!"

"This dark old St. Peter has a fierce and ugly scowl, saint

though he be," continued Walter. "He troubles me. But the virgin looks kindly at us."

"Yes; but very sorrowfully, methinks," said Elinor. The easel stood beneath these three old pictures, sustaining one that had been recently commenced. After a little inspection, they began to recognize the features of their own minister, the Rev. Dr. Colman, growing into shape and life as it were, out of a cloud.

"Kind old man!" exclaimed Elinor. "He gazes at me as if he were about to utter a word of paternal advice."

"And at me," said Walter, "as if he were about to shake his head and rebuke me for some suspected iniquity. But so does the original. I shall never feel quite comfortable under his eye, till we stand before him to be married."

They now heard a footstep on the floor, and turning, beheld the painter, who had been some moments in the room, and had listened to a few of their remarks. He was a middle-aged man, with a countenance well worthy of his own pencil. Indeed, by the picturesque though careless arrangement of his rich dress, and, perhaps, because his soul dwelt always among painted shapes, he looked somewhat like a portrait himself. His visitors were sensible of a kindred between the artist and his works, and felt as if one of the pictures had stepped from the canvas to salute them.

Walter Ludlow, who was slightly known to the painter, explained the object of their visit. While he spoke, a sunbeam was falling athwart his figure and Elinor's, with so happy an effect that they also seemed living pictures of youth and beauty, gladdened by bright fortune. The artist was evidently struck.

"My easel is occupied for several ensuing days, and my stay in Boston must be brief," said he, thoughtfully; then, after an observant glance, he added, "but your wishes shall be gratified, though I disappoint the Chief-Justice and Madam Oliver. I must not lose this opportunity, for the sake of painting a few ells of broadcloth and brocade."

The painter expressed a desire to introduce both their portraits into one picture, and represent them engaged in some appropriate action. This plan would have delighted the lovers, but was necessarily rejected, because so large a

space of canvas would have been unfit for the room which it was intended to decorate. Two half-length portraits were therefore fixed upon. After they had taken leave, Walter Ludlow asked Elinor, with a smile, whether she knew what an influence over their fates the painter was about to acquire.

"The old women of Boston affirm," continued he, "that after he has once got possession of a person's face and figure, he may paint him in any act or situation whatever—and the picture will be prophetic. Do you believe it?"

"Not quite," said Elinor, smiling. "Yet if he has such magic, there is something so gentle in his manner that I am sure he will use it well."

It was the painter's choice to proceed with both the portraits at the same time, assigning as a reason, in the mystical language which he sometimes used, that the faces threw light upon each other. Accordingly, he gave now a touch to Walter, and now to Elinor, and the features of one and the other began to start forth so vividly that it appeared as if his triumphant art would actually disengage them from the canvas. Amid the rich light and deep shade they beheld their phantom selves. But, though the likeness promised to be perfect they were not quite satisfied with the expression; it seemed more vague than in most of the painter's works. He, however, was satisfied with the prospect of success, and being much interested in the lovers, employed his leisure moments, unknown to them, in making a crayon sketch of their two figures. During their sittings, he engaged them in conversation, and kindled up their faces with characteristic traits, which, though continually varying, it was his purpose to combine and fix. At length he announced that at their next visit both the portraits would be ready for delivery.

"If my pencil will but be true to my conception, in the few last touches which I meditate," observed he, "these two pictures will be my very best performances. Seldom, indeed, has an artist such subjects."

While speaking, he still bent his penetrative eye upon them, nor withdrew it till they had reached the bottom of the stairs.

Nothing, in the whole circle of human vanities, takes stronger hold of the imagination than this affair of having

a portrait painted. Yet why should it be so? The looking-glass, the polished globes of the andirons, the mirror-like water, and all other reflecting surfaces, continually present us with portraits, or rather ghosts, of ourselves, which we glance at, and straightway forget them. But we forget them only because they vanish. It is the idea of duration —of earthly immortality—that gives such a mysterious interest to our own portraits. Walter and Elinor were not insensible to this feeling, and hastened to the painter's room, punctually at the appointed hour, to meet those pictured shapes which were to be their representatives with posterity. The sunshine flashed after them into the apartment, but left it somewhat gloomy, as they closed the door.

Their eyes were immediately attracted to their portraits, which rested against the furthest wall of the room. At the first glance, through the dim light and the distance, seeing themselves in precisely their natural attitudes, and with all the air that they recognized so well, they uttered a simultaneous exclamation of delight.

"There we stand," cried Walter, enthusiastically, "fixed in sunshine forever! No dark passions can gather on our faces!"

"No," said Elinor, more calmly; "no dreary change can sadden us."

This was said while they were approaching, and had yet gained only an imperfect view of the pictures. The painter, after saluting them, busied himself at a table in completing a crayon sketch, leaving his visitors to form their own judgment as to his perfected labors. At intervals, he sent a glance from beneath his deep eyebrows, watching their countenances in profile, with his pencil suspended over the sketch. They had now stood some moments, each in front of the other's picture, contemplating it with entranced attention, but without utering a word. A lengh Walter stepped forward—then back—viewing Elinor's portrait in various lights, and finally spoke.

"Is there not a change?" said he, in a doubtful and meditative tone. "Yes; the perception of it grows more vivid, the longer I look. It is certainly the same picture that I saw yesterday; the dress—the features—all are the same; and yet something is altered."

"Is, then, the picture less like than it was yesterday?" inquired the painter, now drawing near, with irrepressible interest.

"The features are perfect, Elinor," answered Walter, "and, at the first glance, the expression seemed also hers. But, I could fancy that the portrait has changed countenance while I have been looking at it. The eyes are fixed on mine with a strangely sad and anxious expression. Nay, it is grief and terror! Is this like Elinor?"

"Compare the living face with the pictured one," said the painter.

Walter glanced sidelong at his mistress and started. Motionless and absorbed—fascinated as it were—in contemplation of Walter's portrait, Elinor's face had assumed precisely the expression of which he had just been complaining. Had she practiced for whole hours before a mirror, she could not have caught the look so successfully. Had the picture itself been a mirror, it could not have thrown back her present aspect, with stronger and more melancholy truth. She appeared quite unconscious of the dialogue between the artist and her lover.

"Elinor," exclaimed Walter, in amazement, "what change has come over you?"

She did not hear him, nor desist from her fixed gaze, till he seized her hand, and thus attracted her notice; then, with a sudden tremor, she looked from the picture to the face of the original. "Do you see no change in your portrait?" asked she.

"In mine?—None!" replied Walter, examining it. "But let me see! Yes; there is a slight change—an improvement, I think, in the picture, though none in the likeness. It has a livelier expression than yesterday, as if some bright thought were flashing from the eyes, and about to be uttered from the lips. Now that I have caught the look, it becomes very decided."

While he was intent on these observations, Elinor turned to the painter. She regarded him with grief and awe, and felt that he repaid her with sympathy and commiseration, though wherefore she could but vaguely guess.

"That look!" whispered she, and shuddered. "How came it there?"

"Madam," said the painter, sadly, taking her hand, and leading her apart, "in both these pictures I have painted what I saw. The artist—the true artist—must look beneath the exterior. It is his gift—his proudest but often a melancholy one—to see the inmost soul, and by a power indefinable even to himself to make it glow or darken upon the canvas, in glances that express the thought and sentiment of years. Would that I might convince myself of error in the present instance!"

They had now approached the table, on which were heads in chalk, hands almost as expressive as ordinary faces, ivied church towers, thatched cottages, old thunder-stricken trees, Oriental and antique costume, and all such picturesque vagaries of an artist's idle moments. Turning them over, with seeming carelessness, a crayon sketch of two figures was disclosed.

"If I have failed," continued he, "if your heart does not see itself reflected in your own portrait, if you have no secret cause to trust my delineation of the other, it is not yet too late to alter them. I might change the action of these figures too. But would it influence the event?"

He directed her notice to the sketch. A thrill ran through Elinor's frame; a shriek was upon her lips; but she stifled it, with the self-command that becomes habitual to all who hide thoughts of fear and anguish within their bosoms. Turning from the table, she perceived that Walter had advanced near enough to have seen the sketch, though she could not determine whether it had caught his eye.

"We will not have the pictures altered," said she hastily. "If mine is sad, I shall but look the gayer for the contrast"

"Be it so," answered the painter, bowing. "May your griefs be such fanciful ones that only your picture may mourn for them! For your joys—may they be true and deep, and paint themselves upon this lovely face till it quite belie my art!"

After the marriage of Walter and Elinor, the pictures formed the two most splendid ornaments of their abode. They hung side by side, separated by a narrow panel, appearing to eye each other constantly, yet always returning

the gaze of the spectator. Travelled gentlemen, who professed a knowledge of such subjects, reckoned these among the most admirable specimens of modern portraiture; while common observers compared them with the originals, feature by feature, and were rapturous in praise of the likeness. But it was on a third class—neither travelled connoisseurs nor common observers, but people of natural sensibility—that the pictures wrought their strongest effect. Such persons might gaze carelessly at first, but, becoming interested, would return day after day, and study these painted faces like the pages of a mystic volume. Walter Ludlow's portrait attracted their earliest notice. In the absence of himself and his bride, they sometimes disputed as to the expression which the painter had intended to throw upon the features; all agreeing that there was a look of earnest import, though no two explained it alike. There was less diversity of opinion in regard to Elinor's picture. They differed, indeed, in their attempts to estimate the nature and depth of the gloom that dwelt upon her face, but agreed that it was gloom, and alien from the natural temperament of their youthful friend. A certain fanciful person announced, as the result of much scrutiny, that both these pictures were parts of one design, and that the melancholy strength of feeling, in Elinor's countenance, bore reference to the more vivid emotion, or, as he termed it, the wild passion, in that of Walter. Though unskilled in the art, he even began a sketch, in which the action of the two figures was to correspond with their mutual expression.

It was whispered among friends, that, day by day, Elinor's face was assuming a deeper shade of pensiveness, which threatened soon to render her too true a counterpart of her melancholy picture. Walter, on the other hand, instead of acquiring the vivid look which the painter had given him on the canvas, became reserved and downcast, with no outward flashes of emotion, however it might be smouldering within. In course of time, Elinor hung a gorgeous curtain of purple silk, wrought with flowers, and fringed with heavy golden tassels, before the pictures, under pretence that the dust would tarnish their hues, or the light dim them. It was enough. Her visitors felt that the massive folds of the silk

must never be withdrawn, nor the portraits mentioned in her presence.

Time wore on; and the painter came again. He had been far enough to the north to see the silver cascade of the Crystal Hills, and to look over the vast round of cloud and forest, from the summit of New England's loftiest mountain. But he did not profane that scene by the mockery of his art. He had also lain in a canoe on the bosom of Lake George, making his soul the mirror of its loveliness and grandeur, till not a picture in the Vatican was more vivid than his recollection. He had gone with the Indian hunters to Niagara, and there, again, had flung his hopeless pencil down the precipice, feeling that he could as soon paint the roar as aught else that goes to make up the wondrous cataract. In truth, it was seldom his impulse to copy natural scenery, except as a framework for the delineations of the human form and face, instinct with thought, passion, or suffering. With store of such, his adventurous ramble had enriched him; the stern dignity of Indian chiefs; the dusky loveliness of Indian girls; the domestic life of wigwams; the stealthy march; the battle beneath gloomy pine trees; the frontier fortress with its garrison; the anomaly of the old French partisan, bred in courts, but grown gray in shaggy deserts; such were the scenes and portraits that he had sketched. The glow of perilous moments; flashes of wild feeling; struggles of fierce power—love, hate, grief, frenzy—in a word, all the worn-out heart of the old earth had been revealed to him under a new form. His portfolio was filled with graphic illustrations of the volume of his memory, which genius would transmute into its own substance, and imbue with immortality. He felt that the deep wisdom in his art, which he had sought so far, was found.

But, amid stern or lovely nature, in the perils of the forest, or its overwhelming peacefulness, still there had been two phantoms, the companions of his way. Like all other men around whom an engrossing purpose wreathes itself, he was insulated from the mass of human kind. He had no aim —no pleasure—no sympathies—but what were ultimately connected with his art. Though gentle in manner, and upright in intent and action, he did not possess kindly feelings; his

heart was cold; no living creature could be brought near enough to keep him warm. For these two beings, however, he had felt, in its greatest intensity, the sort of interest which always allied him to the subjects of his pencil. He had pried into their souls with his keenest insight, and pictured the result upon their features with his utmost skill, so as barely to fall short of that standard which no genius ever reached, his own severe conception. He had caught from the duskiness of the future—at least, so he fancied—a fearful secret, and had obscurely revealed it on the portraits. So much of himself—of his imagination and all other powers—had been lavished on the study of Walter and Elinor, that he almost regarded them as creations of his own, like the thousands with which he had peopled the realms of Picture. Therefore did they flit through the twilight of the woods, hover on the mist of waterfalls, look forth from the mirror of the lake, nor melt away in the noontide sun. They haunted his pictorial fancy, not as mockeries of life, nor pale goblins of the dead, but in the guise of portraits, each with the unalterable expression which his magic had evoked from the caverns of the soul. He could not recross the Atlantic, till he had again beheld the originals of those airy pictures.

"Oh, glorious Art!" thus mused the enthusiastic painter, as he trod the street. "Thou art the image of the Creator's own. The innumerable forms that wander in nothingness start into being at thy beck. The dead live again. Thou recallest them to their old scenes, and givest their gray shadows the lustre of a better life, at once earthly and immortal. Thou snatchest back the fleeting moments of History. With thee, there is no Past; for, at thy touch, all that is great becomes forever present; and illustrious men live through long ages, in the visible performance of the very deeds which made them what they are. Oh, potent Art! as thou bringest the faintly revealed Past to stand in that narrow strip of sunlight which we call Now, canst thou summon the shrouded Future to meet her there? Have I not achieved it! Am I not thy Prophet?"

Thus with a proud yet melancholy fervor did he almost cry aloud, as he passed through the toilsome street, among people that knew not of his reveries, nor could understand

nor care for them. It is not good for man to cherish a solitary ambition. Unless there be those around him by whose example he may regulate himself, his thoughts, desires, and hopes will become extravagant, and he the semblance, perhaps the reality, of a madman. Reading other bosoms, with an acuteness almost preternatural, the painter failed to see the disorder of his own.

"And this should be the house," said he, looking up and down the front, before he knocked. "Heaven help my brains! That picture! Methinks it will never vanish. Whether I look at the windows or the door, there it is framed within them, painted strongly, and glowing in the richest tints—the faces of the portraits—the figures and actions of the sketch!"

He knocked.

"The portraits! Are they within?" inquired he, of the domestic; then recollecting himself—"your master and mistress! Are they at home?"

"They are, sir," said the servant, adding, as he noticed that picturesque aspect of which the painter could never divest himself, "and the Portraits too!"

The guest was admitted into a parlor, communicating by a central door with an interior room of the same size. As the first apartment was empty, he passed to the entrance of the second, within which his eyes were greeted by those living personages, as well as their pictured representatives, who had long been the object of so singular an interest. He involuntarily paused on the threshold.

They had not perceived his approach. Walter and Elinor were standing before the portraits, whence the former had just flung back the rich and voluminous folds of the silken curtain, holding its golden tassel with one hand, while the other grasped that of his bride. The pictures, concealed for months, gleamed forth again in undiminished splendor, appearing to throw a sombre light across the room rather than to be disclosed by a borrowed radiance. That of Elinor had been almost prophetic. A pensiveness, and next a gentle sorrow, had successively dwelt upon her countenance, deepening, with the lapse of time, into a quiet anguish. A mixture of affright would now have made it the very expression of the portrait. Walter's face was moody and dull, or ani-

mated only by fitful flashes, which left a heavier darkness for their momentary illumination. He looked from Elinor to her portrait, and thence to his own, in the contemplation of which he finally stood absorbed.

The painter seemed to hear the step of Destiny approaching behind him, on its progress toward its victims. A strange thought darted into his mind. Was not his own the form in which that Destiny had embodied itself, and he a chief agent of the coming evil which he had foreshadowed?

Still, Walter remained silent before the picture, communing with it, as with his own heart, and abandoning himself to the spell of evil influence that the painter had cast upon the features. Gradually his eyes kindled; while, as Elinor watched the increasing wildness of his face, her own assumed a look of terror; and when at last he turned upon her, the resemblance of both to their portraits was complete.

"Our fate is upon us!" howled Walter. "Die!"

Drawing a knife, he sustained her, as she was sinking to the ground, and aimed it at her bosom. In the action and in the look and attitude of each, the painter beheld the figure of his sketch. The picture, with all its tremendous coloring was finished.

"Hold, madman!" cried he, sternly.

He had advanced from the door, and interposed himself between the wretched beings, with the same sense of power to regulate their destiny as to alter a scene upon the canvas. He stood like a magician, controlling the phantoms which he had evoked.

"What!" muttered Walter Ludlow, as he relapsed from fierce excitement into silent gloom. "Does Fate impede its own decree?"

"Wretched lady!" said the painter. "Did I not warn you?"

"You did," replied Elinor, calmly, as her terror gave place to the quiet grief which it had disturbed. "But—I loved him!"

Is there not a deep moral in the tale? Could the result of one, or all our deeds, be shadowed forth and set before us—some would call it Fate and hurry onward, others be swept along by their passionate desires—and none be turned aside by the PROPHETIC PICTURES.

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

BY WASHINGTON IRVING

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

By WASHINGTON IRVING

(*Found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker*)

"A pleasing land of drowsy head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer sky."
—*Castle of Indolence*

IN THE bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappaan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town.

This name was given it, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about three miles, there is a little valley or rather lap of land among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose, and the occasional whistle of a quail, or tapping of a woodpecker, is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noon-time, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the sabbath stillness around

and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of Sleepy Hollow, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a high German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs; are subject to trances and visions, and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air.

The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole nine fold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball in some nameless battle during the revolutionary war, and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk, hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church that is at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been carc-

ful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this specter, allege that, the body of the trooper having been buried in the churchyard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in mighty quest of his head, and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the hollow like a midnight blast is owing to his being belated and in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows, and the specter is known at all the country firesides by the name of The Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative—to dream dreams and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud; for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New York, that population, manners and customs remain fixed, while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water which border a rapid stream, where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane, who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut, a State which supplies the

Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodmen and country schoolmasters.

The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weathercock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

His schoolhouse was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs, the windows partly glazed and partly patched with leaves of copy-books. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes set against the window-shutters; so that, though a thief might get in with perfect ease he would find some embarrassment in getting out—an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eelpot. The schoolhouse stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by and a formidable birch-tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard of a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a beehive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master in the tone of menace or command; or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, that ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "spare the rod and spoil the child."—Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school who joy in the

smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity, taking the burden off the backs of the weak and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little, tough, wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called "doing his duty by their parents"; and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that "he would remember it and thank him for it the longest day he had to live."

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holyday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed, it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and, though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time, thus going the rounds of the neighborhood with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labors of their farms; helped to make hay; mended the fences; took the horses to water; drove the cows from pasture, and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers, by petting the children, particularly the

youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him on Sundays to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation, and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus by divers little makeshifts, in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of head-work, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle gentleman-like personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver teapot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the churchyard, between services on Sundays! gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overrun the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones, or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half itinerant life, also, he was a kind of travel-

ing gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house, so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's "History of New England Witchcraft," in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvelous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spell-bound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover, bordering the little brook that whimpered by his schoolhouse, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way, by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination: the moan of the whip-poor-will[1] from the hill-side; the boding cry of the tree-toad, that harbinger of storm; the dreary hooting of the screech-owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fire-flies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes; and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was to pass

[1] The whip-poor-will is a bird which is only heard at night. It receives its name from its note, which is thought to resemble those words.

long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and sputtering along the hearth, and listen to their marvelous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them wofully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars, and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and where, of course, no specter dared to show its face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homeward. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path, amid the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night!—With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window!—How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted specter, beset his very path!—How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet, and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him!—and how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the galloping Hessian on one of his mighty scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind, that walk in darkness: and though he had seen many specters in his time, and had been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the Devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, gob-

lins, and the whole race of witches put together; and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge, ripe and melting and rosy-cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time, and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart toward the sex; and it is not to be wondered at that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes, more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within these, everything was snug, happy, and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm-tree spread its broad branches over it, at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well formed of a barrel, and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook that babbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn that might have served for a church, every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves;

and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings, or buried in their bosoms, and others, swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek, unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens, from whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and guinea-fowls fretting about it like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish, discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting pig running about, with a pudding in its belly and an apple in its mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy, and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey, but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat and Indian corn, and the orchards burdened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his

imagination expanded with the idea how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee—or the Lord knows where!

When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged, but lowly-sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers. The low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end and a churn at the other showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wonderful Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the center of the mansion, and the place of usual residence. Here, rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool, ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn and strings of dried apples and peaches hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs, and dark mahogany tables, shone like mirrors; andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch shells decorated the mantel-piece; strings of various colored birds' eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the center of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and

his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had anything but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily conquered adversaries, to contend with; and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass and walls of adamant to the castle-keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the center of a Christmas pie, and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were forever presenting new difficulties and impediments, and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers who beset every portal to her heart; keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these, the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roistering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rung with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff, but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb, he had received the nickname of Brom Bones, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights, and with the ascendency which bodily strength always acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone that admitted of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and, with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good-humor at bottom. He had three or four boon companions of his own stamp, who regarded him as their model, and at the

head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather, he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks, and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good-will; and when any madcap prank or rustic brawl occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within, all other suitors passed by in despair and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk!—he was as erect and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles.

Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently-insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had anything to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and like a reasonable man, and an excellent father, let her have her way in everything. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage the poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus, while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the meantime, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favorable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for a man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He that wins a thousand common hearts, is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette, is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined: his horse was no longer seen tied at the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature,

would fain have carried matters to open warfare, and settled their pretensions to the lady according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore —by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him; he had overheard the boast of Bones, that he would "double the schoolmaster up, and put him on a shelf"; and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system; it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains; smoked out his singing-school, by stopping up the chimney; broke into the schoolhouse at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings of withe and window stakes, and turned everything topsy-turvy; so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod's, to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way, matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situations of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on the lofty stool from whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that scepter of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails, behind the throne, a constant terror to evil doers; while on the desk before him might be seen sundry contraband articles and prohibited weapons, detected upon the persons of idle urchins, such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper game-cocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of

buzzing stillness reigned throughout the schoolroom. It was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a negro in tow-cloth jacket and trousers, a round crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making, or "quilting frolic," to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel's; and having delivered his message with that air of importance, and effort at fine language, which a negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet schoolroom. The scholars were hurried through their lessons, without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed, or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside, without being put away on the shelves; inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time; bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green, in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half-hour at his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his looks by a bit of broken looking-glass that hung up in the schoolhouse. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman, of the name of Hans Van Ripper, and thus gallantly mounted, issued forth like a knight-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he bestrode was a broken-down plow-horse that had outlived almost everything but his viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burrs; one eye had

lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral, but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from his name, which was Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favorite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal; for, old and broken-down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a scepter, and as the horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called, and the skirts of his black coat fluttered out almost to the horse's tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed as they shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day; the sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory-nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble-field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fullness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking, from bush to bush and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cock-robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note, and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds; and the golden-winged

woodpecker, with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget and splendid plumage; and the cedar-bird, with its red-tipped wings and yellow-tipped tail, and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light blue coat and white underclothes, screaming and chattering, nodding, and bobbing, and bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples, some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees, some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market, others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Further on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty-pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields, breathing the odor of the beehive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipations stole over his mind of dainty slap-jacks, well-buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and "sugared suppositions," he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down into the west. The wide bosom of the Tappaan Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint, changing gradually into a pure apple green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark gray and purple of their rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the

mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of the Heer Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk, withered little dames, in close crimped caps, long-waisted gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pin-cushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lasses, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon, or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovations. The sons, in short square-skirted coats, with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eelskin for the purpose, it being esteemed throughout that country as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favorite steed Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable well-broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlor of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious display of red and white, but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped-up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty doughnut, the tender oly-koek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple pies, and peach pies, and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and

roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly teapot sending up its clouds of vapor from the midst—Heaven bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer, and whose spirits rose with eating, as some men's do with drink. He could not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendor. Then, he thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old schoolhouse; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good-humor, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh, and a pressing invitation to "fall to and help themselves."

And now the sound of the music from the common room, or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old gray-headed negro, who had been the itinerant orchestra of the neighborhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped away on two or three strings, accompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fiber about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought St. Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the

negroes; who, having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighborhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window, gazing with delight at the scene, rolling their white eyeballs, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? —the lady of his heart was his partner in the dance, and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with Old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawling out long stories about the war.

This neighborhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly favored places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding, and infested with refugees, cowboys, and all kind of border chivalry. Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each story-teller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breastwork, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of White Plains, being an excellent master of defense, parried a musket-ball with a small-sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whiz round the blade and glance off at the hilt; in proof of which he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighborhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions

thrive best in these sheltered long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap, and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have traveled away from the neighborhood: so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom hear of ghosts except in our long-established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts was doubtless owing to the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighborhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favorite specter of Sleepy Hollow, the headless horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patrolling the country, and, it is said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the churchyard.

The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity, beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might

rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. Such was one of the favorite haunts of the headless horseman, and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the treetops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvelous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that, on returning one night from the neighboring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that he had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but just as they came to the church bridge the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenance of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sunk deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvelous events that had taken place in his native State of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favorite swains, and their light-hearted

laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter, until they gradually died away—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-à-tête with the heiress, fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chapfallen.—Oh, these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks?—Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival?—Heaven only knows, not I!—Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a henroost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crestfallen, pursued his travel homeward, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him the Tappaan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight he could even hear the barking of the watch-dog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this faithful companion of man. Now and then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bullfrog from a

neighboring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably, and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker, the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the center of the road stood an enormous tulip tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by; and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights and doleful lamentations told concerning it.

As Ichabod approached this fearful tree he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered: it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white hanging in the midst of the tree: he paused, and ceased whistling; but, on looking more narrowly, perceived that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan —his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly wooded glen known by the name of Wiley's Swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grape-vines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this

bridge was the severest trial. It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of a schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot. It was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder-bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen, black and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveler.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents—"Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgeled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervor into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some

degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road, jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed, in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind—the other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavored to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveler in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck, on perceiving that he was headless! but his horror was still more increased, on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of his saddle! His terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping, by a sudden movement, to give his companion the slip—but the specter started full jump with him. Away, then, they dashed through thick and thin; stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong downhill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow, shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story; and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskillful rider an apparent advantage in the chase; but just as he had got half-way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavored to hold it firm, but in vain; and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears: the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskillful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones's ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprung upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side, and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash—he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast—dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod.

The boys assembled at the schoolhouse, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper, as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes full of dog's ears; and a broken pitch-pipe. As to the books and furniture of the schoolhouse, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's "History of Witchcraft," a New England Almanac, and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted, by several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honor of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who, from that time forward, determined to send his children no more to school; observing that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole budget of others, were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the

present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the galloping Hessian. As he was a bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him! the school was removed to a different quarter of the Hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighborhood partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time; had been admitted to the bar; turned politician; electioneered; written for the newspapers; and finally had been made a Justice of the Ten Pound Court. Brom Bones too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance, conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe; and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the mill-pond. The schoolhouse being deserted, soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue; and the plow-boy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.

POSTSCRIPT

FOUND IN THE HANDWRITING OF MR. KNICKERBOCKER

The preceding Tale is given, almost in the precise words in which I heard it related at a Corporation meeting of the ancient city of the Manhattoes,[2] at which were present many of its sagest and most illustrious burghers. The narrator was a pleasant, shabby, gentlemanly old fellow in pepper-and-salt clothes, with a sadly humorous face; and one whom I strongly suspected of being poor—he made such efforts to be entertaining. When his story was concluded there was much laughter and approbation, particularly from two or three deputy aldermen, who had been asleep the greater part of the time. There was, however, one tall, dry-looking old gentleman, with beetling eyebrows, who maintained a grave and rather severe face throughout; now and then folding his arms, inclining his head, and looking down upon the floor, as if turning a doubt over in his mind. He was one of your wary men, who never laugh but upon good grounds—when they have reason and the law on their side. When the mirth of the rest of the company had subsided, and silence was restored, he leaned one arm on the elbow of his chair, and sticking the other a-kimbo, demanded, with a slight but exceedingly sage motion of the head and contraction of the brow, what was the moral of the story, and what it went to prove.

The story-teller, who was just putting a glass of wine to his lips, as a refreshment after his toils, paused for a moment, looked at his inquirer with an air of infinite deference, and lowering the glass slowly to the table, observed that the story was intended most logically to prove:

"That there is no situation in life but has its advantages and pleasures—provided we will but take a joke as we find it;

"That, therefore, he that runs races with goblin troopers is likely to have rough riding of it;

"Ergo, for a country schoolmaster to be refused the hand

[2] New York.

of a Dutch heiress is a certain step to high preferment in the State."

The cautious old gentleman knit his brows tenfold closer after this explanation, being sorely puzzled by the ratiocination of the syllogism; while, methought, the one in pepper-and-salt eyed him with something of a triumphant leer. At length he observed, that all this was very well, but still he thought the story a little on the extravagant—there were one or two points on which he had his doubts:

"Faith, sir," replied the story-teller, "as to that matter, I don't believe one-half of it myself." D. K.

THE GOLD-BUG

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

THE GOLD-BUG

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What ho! what ho! this fellow is dancing mad!
He hath been bitten by the Tarantula.
—*All in the Wrong*

MANY years ago, I contracted an intimacy with a Mr. William Legrand. He was of an ancient Huguenot family, and had once been wealthy; but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want. To avoid the mortification consequent upon his disasters, he left New Orleans, the city of his forefathers, and took up his residence at Sullivan's Island, near Charleston, South Carolina.

This island is a very singular one. It consists of little else than the sea sand, and is about three miles long. Its breadth at no point exceeds a quarter of a mile. It is separated from the mainland by a scarcely perceptible creek, oozing its way through a wilderness of reeds and slime, a favorite resort of the marsh-hen. The vegetation, as might be supposed, is scant, or at least dwarfish. No trees of any magnitude are to be seen. Near the western extremity, where Fort Moultrie stands, and where are some miserable frame buildings, tenanted, during the summer, by the fugitives from Charleston dust and fever, may be found, indeed, the bristly palmetto; but the whole island, with the exception of this western point, and a line of hard, white beach on the seacoast, is covered with a dense undergrowth of the sweet myrtle so much prized by the horticulturists of England. The shrub here often attains the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and forms an almost impenetrable coppice, burdening the air with its fragrance.

In the inmost recesses of this coppice, not far from the eastern or more remote end of the island, Legrand had built himself a small hut, which he occupied when I first, by mere

accident, made his acquaintance. This soon ripened into friendship—for there was much in the recluse to excite interest and esteem. I found him well educated, with unusual powers of mind, but infected with misanthropy, and subject to perverse moods of alternate enthusiasm and melancholy. He had with him many books, but rarely employed them. His chief amusements were gunning and fishing, or sauntering along the beach and through the myrtles, in quest of shells or entomological specimens—his collection of the latter might have been envied by a Swammerdamm. In these excursions he was usually accompanied by an old negro, called Jupiter, who had been manumitted before the reverses of the family, but who could be induced, neither by threats nor by promises, to abandon what he considered his right of attendance upon the footsteps of his young "Massa Will." It is not improbable that the relatives of Legrand, conceiving him to be somewhat unsettled in intellect, had contrived to instil this obstinacy into Jupiter, with a view to the supervision and guardianship of the wanderer.

The winters in the latitude of Sullivan's Island are seldom very severe, and in the fall of the year it is a rare event indeed when a fire is considered necessary. About the middle of October, 18—, there occurred, however, a day of remarkable chilliness. Just before sunset I scrambled my way through the evergreens to the hut of my friend, whom I had not visited for several weeks—my residence being, at that time, in Charleston, a distance of nine miles from the island, while the facilities of passage and re-passage were very far behind those of the present day. Upon reaching the hut I rapped, as was my custom, and getting no reply, sought for the key where I knew it was secreted, unlocked the door, and went in. A fine fire was blazing upon the hearth. It was a novelty, and by no means an ungrateful one. I threw off an overcoat, took an armchair by the crackling logs, and awaited patiently the arrival of my hosts.

Soon after dark they arrived, and gave me a most cordial welcome. Jupiter, grinning from ear to ear, bustled about to prepare some marsh-hens for supper. Legrand was in one of his fits—how else shall I term them?—of enthusiasm. He had found an unknown bivalve, forming a new genus,

and, more than this, he had hunted down and secured, with Jupiter's assistance, a *scarabaeus* which he believed to be totally new, but in respect to which he wished to have my opinion on the morrow.

"And why not to-night?" I asked, rubbing my hands over the blaze, and wishing the whole tribe of *scarabaei* at the devil.

"Ah, if I had only known you were here!" said Legrand, "but it's so long since I saw you; and how could I foresee that you would pay me a visit this very night, of all others? As I was coming home I met Lieutenant G——, from the fort, and, very foolishly, I lent him the bug; so it will be impossible for you to see it until the morning. Stay here to-night, and I will send Jup down for it at sunrise. It is the loveliest thing in creation!"

"What?—sunrise?"

"Nonsense! no!—the bug. It is of a brilliant gold color—about the size of a large hickory-nut—with two jet-black spots near one extremity of the back, and another, somewhat longer, at the other. The *antennae* are—"

"Dey ain't no tin in him, Massa Will, I keep a tellin' on you," here interrupted Jupiter; "de bug is a goole-bug, solid, ebery bit of him, inside and all, sep him wing—neber feel half so hebby a bug in my life."

"Well, suppose it is, Jup," replied Legrand, somewhat more earnestly, it seemed to me, than the case demanded; "is that any reason for your letting the birds burn? The color"—here he turned to me—"is really almost enough to warrant Jupiter's idea. You never saw a more brilliant metallic lustre than the scales emit—but of this you cannot judge till to-morrow. In the meantime I can give you some idea of the shape." Saying this, he seated himself at a small table, on which were a pen and ink, but no paper. He looked for some in a drawer, but found none.

"Never mind," he said at length, "this will answer;" and he drew from his waistcoat pocket a scrap of what I took to be very dirty foolscap, and made upon it a rough drawing with the pen. While he did this, I retained my seat by the fire, for I was still chilly. When the design was complete, he handed it to me without rising. As I received it, a loud

growl was heard, succeeded by a scratching at the door. Jupiter opened it, and a large Newfoundland, belonging to Legrand, rushed in, leaped upon my shoulders, and loaded me with caresses; for I had shown him much attention during previous visits. When his gambols were over, I looked at the paper, and, to speak the truth, found myself not a little puzzled at what my friend had depicted.

"Well!" I said, after contemplating it for some minutes, "this *is* a strange *scarabaeus,* I must confess; new to me; never saw anything like it before—unless it was a skull, or a death's-head, which it more nearly resembles than anything else that has come under *my* observation."

"A death's-head!" echoed Legrand. "Oh—yes well, it has something of that appearance upon paper, no doubt. The two upper black spots look like eyes, eh? and the longer one at the bottom like a mouth—and then the shape of the whole is oval."

"Perhaps so," said I; "but, Legrand, I fear you are no artist. I must wait until I see the beetle itself, if I am to form any idea of its personal appearance."

"Well, I don't know," said he, a little nettled, "I draw tolerably—*should* do it at least—have had good masters, and flatter myself that I am not quite a blockhead."

"But, my dear fellow, you are joking, then," said I; "this is a very passable *skull*—indeed, I may say that it is a very *excellent* skull, according to the vulgar notions about such specimens of physiology—and your *scarabaeus* must be the queerest *scarabaeus* in the world if it resembles it. Why, we may get up a very thrilling bit of superstition upon this hint. I presume you will call the bug *scarabaeus caput hominis,* or something of that kind—there are many similar titles in the Natural Histories. But where are the *antennae* you spoke of?"

"The *antennae!*" said Legrand, who seemed to be getting unaccountably warm upon the subject; "I am sure you must see the *antennae.* I made them as distinct as they are in the original insect, and I presume that is sufficient."

"Well, well," I said, "perhaps you have—still I don't see them;" and I handed him the paper without additional remark, not wishing to ruffle his temper; but I was much sur-

prised at the turn affairs had taken; his ill humor puzzled me—and, as for the drawing of the beetle, there were positively *no antennae* visible, and the whole did bear a very close resemblance to the ordinary cuts of a death's-head.

He received the paper very peevishly, and was about to crumple it, apparently to throw it in the fire, when a casual glance at the design seemed suddenly to rivet his attention. In an instant his face grew violently red—in another as excessively pale. For some minutes he continued to scrutinize the drawing minutely where he sat. At length he arose, took a candle from the table, and proceeded to seat himself upon a sea-chest in the farthest corner of the room. Here again he made an anxious examination of the paper; turning it in all directions. He said nothing, however, and his conduct greatly astonished me; yet I thought it prudent not to exacerbate the growing moodiness of his temper by any comment. Presently he took from his coat-pocket a wallet, placed the paper carefully in it, and deposited both in a writing-desk, which he locked. He now grew more composed in his demeanor; but his original air of enthusiasm had quite disappeared. Yet he seemed not so much sulky as abstracted. As the evening wore away he became more and more absorbed in revery, from which no sallies of mine could arouse him. It had been my intention to pass the night at the hut, as I had frequently done before, but, seeing my host in this mood, I deemed it proper to take leave. He did not press me to remain, but, as I departed, he shook my hand with even more than his usual cordiality.

It was about a month after this (and during the interval I had seen nothing of Legrand) when I received a visit, at Charleston, from his man, Jupiter. I had never seen the good old negro look so dispirited, and I feared that some serious disaster had befallen my friend.

"Well, Jup," said I, "what is the matter now?—how is your master?"

"Why, to speak de troof, massa, him not so berry well as mought be."

"Not well! I am truly sorry to hear it. What does he complain of?"

"Dar! dat's it!—him neber 'plain of notin—but him berry sick for all dat."

"*Very* sick, Jupiter!—why didn't you say so at once? Is he confined to bed?"

"No, dat he ain't—he ain't 'fin'd nowhar—dat's just whar de shoe pinch—my mind is got to be berry hebby 'bout poor Massa Will."

"Jupiter, I should like to understand what it is you are talking about. You say your master is sick. Hasn't he told you what ails him?"

"Why, massa, 'taint worf while for to git mad about de matter—Massa Will say noffin at all ain't de matter wid him—but den what make him go about looking dis here way, wid he head down and he soldiers up, and as white as a gose? And den he keep a syphon all de time—"

"Keeps a what, Jupiter?"

"Keeps a syphon wid de figgurs on de slate—de queerest figgurs I ebber did see. Ise gittin' to be skeered, I tell you. Hab for to keep mighty tight eye 'pon him 'noovers. Todder day he gib me slip 'fore de sun up and was gone de whole ob de blessed day. I had a big stick ready cut for to gib him deuced good beating when he did come—but Ise sich a fool dat I hadn't de heart arter all—he looked so berry poorly."

"Eh?—what?—ah yes!—upon the whole I think you had better not be too severe with the poor fellow—don't flog him, Jupiter—he can't very well stand it—but can you form no idea of what has occasioned this illness, or rather this change of conduct? Has anything unpleasant happened since I saw you?"

"No, massa, dey ain't bin noffin onpleasant *since* den—'twas *'fore* den I'm feared—'twas de berry day you was dare."

"How? what do you mean?"

"Why, massa, I mean de bug—dare now."

"The what?"

"De bug—I'm berry sartin dat Massa Will bin bit somewhere 'bout de head by dat goole-bug."

"And what cause have you, Jupiter, for such a supposition?"

"Claws enuff, massa, and mouff, too. I nebber did see sich a deuced bug—he kick and he bite eberyting what cum near him. Massa Will cotch him fuss, but had for to let him go 'gin mighty quick, I tell you—den was de time he must ha' got de bite. I didn't like de look ob de bug mouff, myself, nohow, so I wouldn't take hold ob him wid my finger, but I cotch him wid a piece ob paper dat I found. I rap him up in de paper and stuff a piece of it in he mouff —dat was de way."

"And you think, then, that your master was really bitten by the beetle, and that the bite made him sick?"

"I don't tink noffin about it—I nose it. What make him dream 'bout de goole so much, if 'taint 'cause he bit by the goole-bug? Ise heerd 'bout dem goole-bugs 'fore dis."

"But how do you know he dreams about gold?"

"How I know? why, 'cause he talk about it in he sleep—dat's how I nose."

"Well, Jup, perhaps you are right; but to what fortunate circumstance am I to attribute the honor of a visit from you to-day?"

"What de matter, massa?"

"Did you bring any message from Mr. Legrand?"

"No, massa, I bring dis here pissel;" and here Jupiter handed me a note which ran thus:

"My Dear——: Why have I not seen you for so long a time? I hope you have not been so foolish as to take offence at any little brusquerie of mine; but no, that is improbable.

"Since I saw you I have had great cause for anxiety. I have something to tell you, yet scarcely know how to tell it, or whether I should tell it at all.

"I have not been quite well for some days past, and poor old Jup annoys me, almost beyond endurance, by his well-meant attentions. Would you believe it?—he had prepared a huge stick, the other day, with which to chastise me for giving him the slip, and spending the day, *solus,* among the hills on the main land. I verily believe that my ill looks alone saved me a flogging.

"I have made no addition to my cabinet since we met.

"If you can, in any way, make it convenient, come over with Jupiter. Do come. I wish to see you to-night, upon business of importance. I assure you that it is of the highest importance. Ever yours,

"WILLIAM LEGRAND."

There was something in the tone of this note which gave me great uneasiness. Its whole style differed materially from that of Legrand. What could he be dreaming of? What new crotchet possessed his excitable brain? What "business of the highest importance" could *he* possibly have to transact? Jupiter's account of him boded no good. I dreaded lest the continued pressure of misfortune had, at length, fairly unsettled the reason of my friend. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, I prepared to accompany the negro.

Upon reaching the wharf, I noticed a scythe and three spades, all apparently new, lying in the bottom of the boat in which we were to embark.

"What is the meaning of all this, Jup?" I inquired.

"Him syfe, massa, and spade."

"Very true; but what are they doing here?"

"Him de syfe and de spade what Massa Will 'sis' 'pon my buying for him in de town, and de debbil's own lot of money I had to gib for 'em."

"But what, in the name of all that is mysterious, is your 'Massa Will' going to do with scythes and spades?"

"Dat's more dan *I* know, and debbil take me if I don't b'lieve 'tis more dan he know, too. But it's all cum ob de bug."

Finding that no satisfaction was to be obtained of Jupiter, whose whole intellect seemed to be absorbed by "de bug," I now stepped into the boat, and made sail. With a fair and strong breeze we soon ran into the little cove to the northward of Fort Moultrie, and a walk of some two miles brought us to the hut. It was about three in the afternoon when we arrived. Legrand had been awaiting us in eager expectation. He grasped my hand with a nervous *empressement* which alarmed me and strengthened the suspicions already entertained. His countenance was pale even to

ghastliness, and his deep-set eyes glared with unnatural lustre. After some inquiries respecting his health, I asked him, not knowing what better to say, if he had yet obtained the *scarabaeus* from Lieutenant G——.

"Oh, yes," he replied, coloring violently, "I got it from him the next morning. Nothing should tempt me to part with that *scarabaeus.* Do you know that Jupiter is quite right about it?"

"In what way?" I asked, with a sad foreboding at heart.

"In supposing it to be a bug of *real gold.*" He said this with an air of profound seriousness, and I felt inexpressibly shocked.

"This bug is to make my fortune," he continued, with a triumphant smile; "to reinstate me in my family possessions. Is it any wonder, then, that I prize it? Since Fortune has thought fit to bestow it upon me, I have only to use it properly, and I shall arrive at the gold of which it is the index. Jupiter, bring me that *scarabaeus!*"

"What! de bug, massa? I'd rudder not go fer trubble dat bug; you mus' git him for your own self." Hereupon Legrand arose, with a grave and stately air, and brought me the beetle from a glass case in which it was enclosed. It was a beautiful *scarabaeus,* and, at that time, unknown to naturalists—of course a great prize in a scientific point of view. There were two round black spots near one extremity of the back, and a long one near the other. The scales were exceedingly hard and glossy, with all the appearance of burnished gold. The weight of the insect was very remarkable, and, taking all things into consideration, I could hardly blame Jupiter for his opinion respecting it; but what to make of Legrand's concordance with that opinion, I could not, for the life of me, tell.

"I sent for you," said he, in a grandiloquent tone, when I had completed my examination of the beetle, "I sent for you that I might have your counsel and assistance in furthering the views of Fate and of the bug—"

"My dear Legrand," I cried, interrupting him, "you are certainly unwell, and had better use some little precautions. You shall go to bed, and I will remain with you a few days, until you get over this. You are feverish and—"

"Feel my pulse," said he.

I felt it, and to say the truth, found not the slightest indication of fever.

"But you may be ill and yet have no fever. Allow me this once to prescribe for you. In the first place, go to bed. In the next—"

"You are mistaken," he interposed; "I am as well as I can expect to be under the excitement which I suffer. If you really wish me well, you will relieve this excitement."

"And how is this to be done?"

"Very easily. Jupiter and myself are going upon an expedition into the hills, upon the mainland, and, in this expedition, we shall need the aid of some person in whom we can confide. You are the only one we can trust. Whether we succeed or fail, the excitement which you now perceive in me will be equally allayed."

"I am anxious to oblige you in any way," I replied; "but do you mean to say that this infernal beetle has any connection with your expedition into the hills?"

"It has."

"Then, Legrand, I can become a party to no such absurd proceeding."

"I am sorry—very sorry—for we shall have to try it by ourselves."

"Try it by yourselves! The man is surely mad!—but stay!—how long do you propose to be absent?"

"Probably all night. We shall start immediately, and be back, at all events, by sunrise."

"And will you promise me, upon your honor, that when this freak of yours is over, and the bug business (good God!) settled to your satisfaction, you will then return home and follow my advice implicitly, as that of your physician?"

"Yes; I promise; and now let us be off, for we have no time to lose."

With a heavy heart I accompanied my friend. We started about four o'clock—Legrand, Jupiter, the dog, and myself. Jupiter had with him the scythe and spades—the whole of which he insisted upon carrying—more through fear, it seemed to me, of trusting either of the implements within reach of his master, than from any excess of industry

or complaisance. His demeanor was dogged in the extreme, and "dat deuced bug" were the sole words which escaped his lips during the journey. For my own part, I had charge of a couple of dark lanterns, while Legrand contented himself with the *scarabaeus,* which he carried attached to the end of a bit of whip-cord; twirling it to and fro, with the air of a conjurer, as he went. When I observed this last, plain evidence of my friend's aberration of mind, I could scarcely refrain from tears. I thought it best, however, to humor his fancy, at least for the present, or until I could adopt some more energetic measures with a chance of success. In the meantime I endeavored, but all in vain, to sound him in regard to the object of the expedition. Having succeeded in inducing me to accompany him, he seemed unwilling to hold conversation upon any topic of minor importance, and to all my questions vouchsafed no other reply than "we shall see!"

We crossed the creek at the head of the island by means of a skiff, and, ascending the high grounds on the shore of the main land, proceeded in a northwesterly direction, through a tract of country excessively wild and desolate, where no trace of a human footstep was to be seen. Legrand led the way with decision; pausing only for an instant, here and there, to consult what appeared to be certain landmarks of his own contrivance upon a former occasion.

In this manner we journeyed for about two hours, and the sun was just setting when we entered a region infinitely more dreary than any yet seen. It was a species of tableland, near the summit of an almost inaccessible hill, densely wooded from base to pinnacle, and interspersed with huge crags that appeared to lie loosely upon the soil, and in many cases were prevented from precipitating themselves into the valleys below, merely by the support of the trees against which they reclined. Deep ravines, in various directions, gave an air of still sterner solemnity to the scene.

The natural platform to which we had clambered was thickly overgrown with brambles, through which we soon discovered that it would have been impossible to force our way but for the scythe; and Jupiter, by direction of his master, proceeded to clear for us a path to the foot of an

enormously tall tulip-tree, which stood, with some eight or ten oaks, upon the level, and far surpassed them all, and all other trees which I had then ever seen, in the beauty of its foliage and form, in the wide spread of its branches, and in the general majesty of its appearance. When we reached this tree, Legrand turned to Jupiter, and asked him if he thought he could climb it. The old man seemed a little staggered by the question, and for some moments made no reply. At length he approached the huge trunk, walked slowly around it and examined it with minute attention. When he had completed his scrutiny, he merely said:

"Yes, massa, Jup climb any tree he eber see in he life."

"Then up with you as soon as possible, for it will soon be too dark to see what we are about."

"How far mus' go up, massa?" inquired Jupiter.

"Get up the main trunk first, and then I will tell you which way to go—and here—stop! take this beetle with you."

"De bug, Massa Will!—de goole-bug!" cried the negro, drawing back in dismay—"what for mus' tote de bug 'way up de tree?—d—n if I do!"

"If you are afraid, Jup, a great big negro like you, to take hold of a harmless little dead beetle, why you can carry it up by this string—but, if you do not take it up with you in some way, I shall be under the necessity of breaking your head with this shovel."

"What de matter now, massa?" said Jup, evidently shamed into compliance; "always want for to raise fuss wid old nigger. Was only funnin' anyhow. Me feered de bug! what I keer for de bug?" Here he took cautiously hold of the extreme end of the string, and, maintaining the insect as far from his person as circumstances would permit, prepared to ascend the tree.

In youth, the tulip-tree, or *Liriodendron Tulipifera,* the most magnificent of American foresters, has a trunk peculiarly smooth, and often rises to a great height without lateral branches; but, in its riper age, the bark becomes gnarled and uneven, while many short limbs make their appearance on the stem. Thus the difficulty of ascension, in the present case, lay more in semblance than in reality. Embracing the

huge cylinder as closely as possible with his arms and knees, seizing with his hands some projections, and resting his naked toes upon others, Jupiter, after one or two narrow escapes from falling, at length wriggled himself into the first great fork, and seemed to consider the whole business as virtually accomplished. The *risk* of the achievement was, in fact, now over, although the climber was some sixty or seventy feet from the ground.

"Which way mus' go now, Massa Will?" he asked.

"Keep up the largest branch—the one on this side," said Legrand. The negro obeyed him promptly, and apparently with but little trouble; ascending higher and higher, until no glimpse of his squat figure could be obtained through the dense foliage which enveloped it. Presently his voice was heard in a sort of halloo.

"How much fudder is got for go?"

"How high up are you?" asked Legrand.

"Ebber so fur," replied the negro; "can see de sky fru de top ob de tree."

"Never mind the sky, but attend to what I say. Look down the trunk and count the limbs below you on this side. How many limbs have you passed?"

"One, two, tree, four, fibe—I done pass fibe big limb, massa, 'pon dis side."

"Then go one limb higher."

In a few minutes the voice was heard again, announcing that the seventh limb was attained.

"Now, Jup," cried Legrand, evidently much excited, "I want you to work your way out upon that limb as far as you can. If you see anything strange let me know."

By this time what little doubt I might have entertained of my poor friend's insanity was put finally at rest. I had no alternative but to conclude him stricken with lunacy, and I became seriously anxious about getting him home. While I was pondering upon what was best to be done, Jupiter's voice was again heard.

"Mos' feerd for to ventur 'pon dis limb berry far—'tis dead limb putty much all de way."

"Did you say it was a *dead* limb, Jupiter?" cried Legrand in a quavering voice.

"Yes, massa, him dead as de door-nail—done up for sartin —done departed dis here life."

"What in the name of heaven shall I do?" asked Legrand, seemingly in the greatest distress.

"Do!" said I, glad of an opportunity to interpose a word, "why, come home and go to bed. Come now!—that's a fine fellow. It's getting late, and, besides, you remember your promise."

"Jupiter," cried he, without heeding me in the least, "do you hear me?"

"Yes, Massa Will, hear you ebber so plain."

"Try the wood well, then, with your knife, and see if you think it *very* rotten."

"Him rotten, massa, sure nuff," replied the negro in a few moments, "but not so berry rotten as mought be. Mought venture out leetle way 'pon de limb by myself, dat's true."

"By yourself!—what do you mean?"

"Why, I mean de bug. 'Tis *berry* hebby bug. S'pose I drop him down fuss, and den de limb won't break wid just de weight ob one nigger."

"You infernal scoundrel!" cried Legrand, apparently much relieved, "what do you mean by telling me such nonsense as that? As sure as you drop that beetle I'll break your neck. Look here, Jupiter, do you hear me?"

"Yes, massa, needn't hollo at poor nigger dat style."

"Well! now listen!—if you will venture out on the limb as far as you think safe, and not let go the beetle, I'll make you a present of a silver dollar as soon as you get down."

"I'm gwine, Massa Will—'deed I is," replied the negro very promptly—"mos' out to the eend now."

"Out to the end!" here fairly screamed Legrand; "do you say you are out to the end of that limb?"

"Soon be to the eend, massa—o-o-o-o-oh! Lor-gol-a-marcy! what *is* dis 'pon de tree?"

"Well!" cried Legrand, highly delighted, "what is it?"

"Why, 'taint noffin but a skull—somebody bin lef' him head up de tree, and de crows done gobble ebery bit ob de meat off."

"A skull, you say!—very well—how is it fastened to the limb?—what holds it on?"

"Sure 'nuff, massa; mus' look. Why dis berry curous sarcumstance, 'pon my word—dare's a great big nail in de skull, what fastens ob it on to de tree."

"Well now, Jupiter, do exactly as I tell you—do you hear?"

"Yes, massa."

"Pay attention, then—find the left eye of the skull."

"Hum! hoo! dat's good! why dey ain't no eye lef' at all."

"Curse your stupidity! do you know your right hand from your left?"

"Yes, I knows dat—knows all 'bout dat—'tis my lef' hand what I chops de wood wid."

"To be sure! you are left-handed; and your left eye is on the same side as your left hand. Now, I suppose, you can find the left eye of the skull, or the place where the left eye has been. Have you found it?"

Here was a long pause. At length the negro asked:

"Is de lef' eye of de skull 'pon de same side as de lef' hand of de skull, too?—'cause de skull ain't got not a bit ob a hand at all—nebber mind! I got de lef' eye now—here de lef' eye! what mus' do wid it?"

"Let the beetle drop through it, as far as the string will reach—but be careful and not let go your hold of the string."

"All dat done, Massa Will; mighty easy ting for to put de bug fru de hole—look out for him dare below!"

During this colloquy no portion of Jupiter's person could be seen; but the beetle, which he had suffered to descend, was now visible at the end of the string, and glistened, like a globe of burnished gold, in the last rays of the setting sun, some of which still faintly illumined the eminence upon which we stood. The *scarabaeus* hung quite clear of any branches, and, if allowed to fall, would have fallen at our feet. Legrand immediately took the scythe, and cleared with it a circular space, three or four yards in diameter, just beneath the insect, and having accomplished this, ordered Jupiter to let go the string and come down from the tree.

Driving a peg, with great nicety, into the ground, at the precise spot where the beetle fell, my friend now produced

from his pocket a tape-measure. Fastening one end of this at that point of the trunk of the tree which was nearest the peg, he unrolled it till it reached the peg and thence further unrolled it, in the direction already established by the two points of the tree and the peg, for the distance of fifty feet—Jupiter clearing away the brambles with the scythe. At the spot thus attained a second peg was driven, and about this, as a centre, a rude circle, about four feet in diameter, described. Taking now a spade himself, and giving one to Jupiter and one to me, Legrand begged us to set about digging as quickly as possible.

To speak the truth, I had no especial relish for such amusement at any time, and, at that particular moment, would willingly have declined it; for the night was coming on, and I felt much fatigued with the exercise already taken; but I saw no mode of escape, and was fearful of disturbing my poor friend's equanimity by a refusal. Could I have depended, indeed, upon Jupiter's aid, I would have had no hesitation in attempting to get the lunatic home by force; but I was too well assured of the old negro's disposition to hope that he would assist me, under any circumstances, in a personal contest with his master. I made no doubt that the latter had been infected with some of the innumerable Southern superstitions about money buried, and that his phantasy had received confirmation by the finding of the *scarabaeus,* or, perhaps, by Jupiter's obstinacy in maintaining it to be "a bug of real gold." A mind disposed to lunacy would readily be led away by such suggestions—especially if chiming in with favorite preconceived ideas—and then I called to mind the poor fellow's speech about the beetle's being "the index of his fortune." Upon the whole, I was sadly vexed and puzzled, but, at length, I concluded to make a virtue of necessity—to dig with a good will, and thus the sooner to convince the visionary, by ocular demonstration, of the fallacy of the opinion he entertained.

The lanterns having been lit, we all fell to work with a zeal worthy a more rational cause; and, as the glare fell upon our persons and implements, I could not help thinking how picturesque a group we composed, and how strange and suspicious our labors must have appeared to any inter-

loper who, by chance, might have stumbled upon our whereabouts.

We dug very steadily for two hours. Little was said; and our chief embarrassment lay in the yelpings of the dog, who took exceeding interest in our proceedings. He, at length, became so obstreperous that we grew fearful of his giving the alarm to some stragglers in the vicinity—or, rather, this was the apprehension of Legrand;—for myself, I should have rejoiced at any interruption which might have enabled me to get the wanderer home. The noise was, at length, very effectually silenced by Jupiter, who, getting out of the hole with a dogged air of deliberation, tied the brute's mouth up with one of his suspenders, and then returned, with a grave chuckle, to his task.

When the time mentioned had expired, we had reached a depth of five feet, and yet no signs of any treasure became manifest. A general pause ensued, and I began to hope that the farce was at an end. Legrand, however, although evidently much disconcerted, wiped his brow thoughtfully and recommenced. We had excavated the entire circle of four feet diameter, and now we slightly enlarged the limit, and went to the farther depth of two feet. Still nothing appeared The gold-seeker, whom I sincerely pitied, at length clambered from the pit, with the bitterest disappointment imprinted upon every feature, and proceeded, slowly and reluctantly, to put on his coat, which he had thrown off at the beginning of his labor. In the meantime I made no remark. Jupiter, at a signal from his master, began to gather up his tools. This done, and the dog having been unmuzzled, we turned in profound silence toward home.

We had taken, perhaps, a dozen steps in this direction, when, with a loud oath, Legrand strode up to Jupiter, and seized him by the collar. The astonished negro opened his eyes and mouth to the fullest extent, let fall the spades, and fell upon his knees.

"You scoundrel!" said Legrand, hissing out the syllables from between his clenched teeth—"you infernal black villain! —speak, I tell you!—answer me this instant, without prevarication!—which—which is your left eye?"

"Oh, my golly, Massa Will! ain't dis here my lef' eye for

sartain?" roared the terrified Jupiter, placing his hand upon his *right* organ of vision, and holding it there with a desperate pertinacity, as if in immediate dread of his master's attempt at a gouge.

"I thought so!—I knew it! hurrah!" vociferated Legrand, letting the negro go and executing a series of curvets and caracols, much to the astonishment of his valet, who, arising from his knees, looked, mutely, from his master to myself, and then from myself to his master.

"Come! we must go back," said the latter, "the game's not up yet"; and he again led the way to the tulip-tree.

"Jupiter," said he, when we reached its foot, "come here! was the skull nailed to the limb with the face outward, or with the face to the limb?"

"De face was out, massa, so dat de crows could get at de eyes good, widout any trubble."

"Well, then, was it this eye or that through which you dropped the beetle?" here Legrand touched each of Jupiter's eyes.

"'Twas dis eye, massa—de lef' eye—jis as you tell me," and here it was his right eye that the negro indicated.

"That will do—we must try it again."

Here my friend, about whose madness I now saw, or fancied that I saw, certain indications of method, removed the peg which marked the spot where the beetle fell, to a spot about three inches to the westward of its former position. Taking, now, the tape measure from the nearest point of the trunk to the peg, as before, and continuing the extension in a straight line to the distance of fifty feet, a spot was indicated, removed, by several yards, from the point at which we had been digging.

Around the new position a circle, somewhat larger than in the former instance, was now described, and we again set to work with the spade. I was dreadfully weary, but, scarcely understanding what had occasioned the change in my thoughts, I felt no longer any great aversion from the labor imposed. I had become most unaccountably interested—nay, even excited. Perhaps there was something, amid all the extravagant demeanor of Legrand—some air of forethought, or of deliberation, which impressed me. I dug eagerly, and

now and then caught myself actually looking, with something that very much resembled expectation, for the fancied treasure, the vision of which had demented my unfortunate companion. At a period when such vagaries of thought most fully possessed me, and when we had been at work perhaps an hour and a half, we were again interrupted by the violent howlings of the dog. His uneasiness, in the first instance, had been, evidently, but the result of playfulness or caprice, but he now assumed a bitter and serious tone. Upon Jupiter's again attempting to muzzle him, he made furious resistance, and, leaping into the hole, tore up the mould frantically with his claws. In a few seconds he had uncovered a mass of human bones, forming two complete skeletons, intermingled with several buttons of metal, and what appeared to be the dust of decayed woollen. One or two strokes of a spade upturned the blade of a large Spanish knife, and, as we dug further, three or four loose pieces of gold and silver coin came to light.

At sight of these the joy of Jupiter could scarcely be restrained, but the countenance of his master wore an air of extreme disappointment. He urged us, however, to continue our exertions, and the words were hardly uttered when I stumbled and fell forward, having caught the toe of my boot in a large ring of iron that lay half buried in the loose earth.

We now worked in earnest, and never did I pass ten minutes of more intense excitement. During this interval we had fairly unearthed an oblong chest of wood, which, from its perfect preservation and wonderful hardness, had plainly been subjected to some mineralizing process—perhaps that of the bichloride of mercury. This box was three feet and a half long, three feet broad, and two and a half feet deep. It was firmly secured by bands of wrought iron, riveted, and forming a kind of open trelliswork over the whole. On each side of the chest, near the top, were three rings of iron—six in all—by means of which a firm hold could be obtained by six persons. Our utmost united endeavors served only to disturb the coffer very slightly in its bed. We at once saw the impossibility of removing so great a weight. Luckily, the sole fastenings of the lid consisted of two sliding bolts. These we drew back—trembling and panting with anxiety.

In an instant, a treasure of incalculable value lay gleaming before us. As the rays of the lanterns fell within the pit, there flashed upward a glow and a glare, from a confused heap of gold and of jewels, that absolutely dazzled our eyes.

I shall not pretend to describe the feelings with which I gazed. Amazement was, of course, predominant. Legrand appeared exhausted with excitement, and spoke very few words. Jupiter's countenance wore, for some minutes, as deadly a pallor as it is possible, in the nature of things, for any negro's visage to assume. He seemed stupefied—thunderstricken. Presently he fell upon his knees in the pit, and burying his naked arms up to the elbows in gold, let them there remain, as if enjoying the luxury of a bath. At length, with a deep sigh, he exclaimed, as if in a soliloquy:

"And dis all cum ob de goole-bug! de putty goole-bug! de poor little goole-bug, what I boosed in dat sabage kind ob style! Ain't you shamed ob yourself, nigger?—answer me dat!"

It became necessary, at last, that I should arouse both master and valet to the expediency of removing the treasure. It was growing late, and it behooved us to make exertion, that we might get everything housed before daylight. It was difficult to say what should be done, and much time was spent in deliberation—so confused were the ideas of all. We, finally, lightened the box by removing two-thirds of its contents, when we were enabled, with some trouble, to raise it from the hole. The articles taken out were deposited among the brambles, and the dog left to guard them, with strict orders from Jupiter neither, upon any pretence, to stir from the spot, nor to open his mouth until our return. We then hurriedly made for home with the chest; reaching the hut in safety, but after excessive toil, at one o'clock in the morning. Worn out as we were, it was not in human nature to do more immediately. We rested until two, and had supper; starting for the hills immediately afterward, armed with three stout sacks, which, by good luck, were upon the premises. A little before four we arrived at the pit, divided the remainder of the booty, as equally as might be, among us, and, leaving the holes unfilled, again set out for the hut, at which, for the second time, we deposited our golden bur-

dens, just as the first faint streaks of the dawn gleamed from over the tree-tops in the East.

We were now thoroughly broken down; but the intense excitement of the time denied us repose. After an unquiet slumber of some three or four hours' duration, we arose, as if by preconcert, to make examination of our treasure.

The chest had been full to the brim, and we spent the whole day, and the greater part of the next night, in a scrutiny of its contents. There had been nothing like order or arrangement. Everything had been heaped in promiscuously. Having assorted all with care, we found ourselves possessed of even vaster wealth than we had at first supposed. In coin, there was rather more than four hundred and fifty thousand dollars—estimating the value of the pieces, as accurately as we could, by the tables of the period. There was not a particle of silver. All was gold of antique date and of great variety—French, Spanish, and German money, with a few English guineas, and some counters, of which we had never seen specimens before. There were several very large and heavy coins, so worn that we could make nothing of their inscriptions. There was no American money. The value of the jewels we found more difficulty in estimating. There were diamonds—some of them exceedingly large and fine—a hundred and ten in all, and not one of them small; eighteen rubies of remarkable brilliancy;—three hundred and ten emeralds, all very beautiful; and twenty-one sapphires, with an opal. These stones had all been broken from their settings and thrown loose in the chest. The settings themselves, which we picked out from among the other gold, appeared to have been beaten up with hammers, as if to prevent identification. Besides all this, there was a vast quantity of solid gold ornaments; nearly two hundred massive finger and ear rings; rich chains—thirty of these, if I remember; eighty-three very large and heavy crucifixes; five gold censers of great value; a prodigious golden punch-bowl, ornamented with richly chased vine-leaves and Bacchanalian figures; with two sword-handles exquisitely embossed, and many other smaller articles which I can not recollect. The weight of these valuables exceeded three hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois; and in this estimate I have not included

one hundred and ninety-seven superb gold watches; three of the number being worth each five hundred dollars, if one. Many of them were very old, and as timekeepers valueless; the works having suffered, more or less, from corrosion—but all were richly jewelled and in cases of great worth. We estimated the entire contents of the chest, that night, at a million and a half of dollars; and upon the subsequent disposal of the trinkets and jewels (a few being retained for our own use), it was found that we had greatly undervalued the treasure.

When, at length, we had concluded our examination, and the intense excitement of the time had, in some measure, subsided, Legrand, who saw that I was dying with impatience for a solution of this most extraordinary riddle, entered into a full detail of all the circumstances connected with it.

"You remember," said he, "the night when I handed you the rough sketch I had made of the *scarabaeus*. You recollect, also, that I became quite vexed at you for insisting that my drawing resembled a death's-head. When you first made this assertion I thought you were jesting; but afterward I called to mind the peculiar spots on the back of the insect, and admitted to myself that your remark had some little foundation in fact. Still, the sneer at my graphic powers irritated me—for I am considered a good artist—and, therefore, when you handed me the scrap of parchment, I was about to crumple it up and throw it angrily into the fire."

"The scrap of paper, you mean," said I.

"No; it had much of the appearance of paper, and at first I supposed it to be such, but when I came to draw upon it, I discovered it at once to be a piece of very thin parchment. It was quite dirty, you remember. Well, as I was in the very act of crumpling it up, my glance fell upon the sketch at which you had been looking, and you may imagine my astonishment when I perceived, in fact, the figure of a death's-head just where, it seemed to me, I had made the drawing of the beetle. For a moment I was too much amazed to think with accuracy. I knew that my design was very different in detail from this—although there was a certain similarity in general outline. Presently I took a candle, and seating myself at the other end of the room, proceeded to scrutinize the parch-

ment more closely. Upon turning it over, I saw my own sketch upon the reverse, just as I had made it. My first idea, now, was mere surprise at the really remarkable similarity of outline—at the singular coincidence involved in the fact that, unknown to me, there should have been a skull upon the other side of the parchment, immediately beneath my figure of the *scarabaeus,* and that this skull, not only in outline, but in size, should so closely resemble my drawing. I say the singularity of this coincidence absolutely stupefied me for a time. This is the usual effect of such coincidences. The mind struggles to establish a connection—a sequence of cause and effect—and, being unable to do so, suffers a species of temporary paralysis. But, when I recovered from this stupor, there dawned upon me gradually a conviction which startled me even far more than the coincidence. I began distinctly, positively, to remember that there had been *no* drawing upon the parchment when I made my sketch of the *scarabaeus.* I became perfectly certain of this; for I recollected turning up first one side and then the other, in search of the cleanest spot. Had the skull been there, of course I could not have failed to notice it. Here was indeed a mystery which I felt it impossible to explain; but, even at that early moment, there seemed to glimmer, faintly, within the most remote and secret chambers of my intellect, a glow-worm-like conception of that truth which last night's adventure brought to so magnificent a demonstration. I arose at once, and, putting the parchment securely away, dismissed all further reflection until I should be alone.

"When you had gone, and when Jupiter was fast asleep, I betook myself to a more methodical investigation of the affair. In the first place, I considered the manner in which the parchment had come into my possession. The spot where we discovered the *scarabaeus* was on the coast of the main-land, about a mile eastward of the island, and but a short distance above high-water mark. Upon my taking hold of it, it gave me a sharp bite, which caused me to let it drop. Jupiter, with his accustomed caution, before seizing the insect, which had flown toward him, looked about him for a leaf, or something of that nature, by which to take hold of it. It was at this moment that his eyes, and mine also, fell

upon the scrap of parchment, which I then supposed to be paper. It was lying half buried in the sand, a corner sticking up. Near the spot where we found it, I observed the remnants of the hull of what appeared to have been a ship's long-boat. The wreck seemed to have been there for a very great while; for the resemblance to boat timbers could scarcely be traced.

"Well, Jupiter picked up the parchment, wrapped the beetle in it, and gave it to me. Soon afterward we turned to go home, and on the way met Lieutenant G——. I showed him the insect, and he begged me to let him take it to the fort. Upon my consenting, he thrust it forthwith into his waistcoat pocket, without the parchment in which it had been wrapped, and which I had continued to hold in my hand during his inspection. Perhaps he dreaded my changing my mind, and thought it best to make sure of the prize at once—you know how enthusiastic he is on all subjects connected with natural history. At the same time, without being conscious of it, I must have deposited the parchment in my own pocket.

"You remember that when I went to the table for the purpose of making a sketch of the beetle, I found no paper where it was usually kept. I looked in the drawer, and found none there. I searched my pockets, hoping to find an old letter, when my hand fell upon the parchment. I thus detail the precise mode in which it came into my possession; for the circumstances impressed me with peculiar force.

"No doubt you will think me fanciful—but I had already established a kind of connection. I had put together two links of a great chain. There was a boat lying upon a seacoast, and not far from the boat was a parchment—*not a paper*—with a skull depicted upon it. You will, of course, ask 'where is the connection?' I reply that the skull, or death's-head, is the well-known emblem of the pirate. The flag of the death's-head is hoisted in all engagements.

"I have said that the scrap was parchment, and not paper. Parchment is durable—almost imperishable. Matters of little moment are rarely consigned to parchment; since, for the mere ordinary purposes of drawing or writing, it is not nearly so well adapted as paper. This reflection suggested

some meaning—some relevancy—in the death's-head. I did not fail to observe, also, the *form* of the parchment. Although one of its corners had been, by some accident, destroyed, it could be seen that the original form was oblong. It was just such a slip, indeed, as might have been chosen for a memorandum—for a record of something to be long remembered and carefully preserved."

"But," I interposed, "you say that the skull was *not* upon the parchment when you made the drawing of the beetle. How then do you trace any connection between the boat and the skull—since this latter, according to your own admission, must have been designed (God only knows how or by whom) at some period subsequent to your sketching the *scarabaeus?*"

"Ah, hereupon turns the whole mystery; although the secret, at this point, I had comparatively little difficulty in solving. My steps were sure and could afford but a single result. I reasoned, for example, thus: When I drew the *scarabaeus,* there was no skull apparent upon the parchment. When I had completed the drawing I gave it to you, and observed you narrowly until you returned it. *You,* therefore, did not design the skull, and no one else was present to do it. Then it was not done by human agency. And nevertheless it was done.

"At this stage of my reflections I endeavored to remember, and *did* remember, with entire distinctness, every incident which occurred about the period in question. The weather was chilly (oh, rare and happy accident!), and a fire was blazing upon the hearth. I was heated with exercise and sat near the table. You, however, had drawn a chair close to the chimney. Just as I placed the parchment in your hand, and as you were in the act of inspecting it, Wolf, the Newfoundland, entered, and leaped upon your shoulders. With your left hand you caressed him and kept him off, while your right, holding the parchment, was permitted to fall listlessly between your knees, and in close proximity to the fire. At one moment I thought the blaze had caught it, and was about to caution you, but, before I could speak, you had withdrawn it, and were engaged in its examination. When I considered all these particulars, I doubted not for a moment

that *heat* had been the agent in bringing to light, upon the parchment, the skull which I saw designed upon it. You are well aware that chemical preparations exist, and have existed time out of mind, by means of which it is possible to write upon either paper or vellum, so that the characters shall become visible only when subjected to the action of fire. Zaffre, digested in *aqua regia,* and diluted with four times its weight of water, is sometimes employed; a green tint results. The regulus of cobalt, dissolved in spirit of nitre, gives a red. These colors disappear at longer or shorter intervals after the material written upon cools, but again become apparent upon the reapplication of heat.

"I now scrutinized the death's-head with care. Its outer edges—the edges of the drawing nearest the edge of the vellum—were far more *distinct* than the others. It was clear that the action of the caloric had been imperfect or unequal. I immediately kindled a fire, and subjected every portion of the parchment to a glowing heat. At first, the only effect was the strengthening of the faint lines in the skull; but, upon persevering in the experiment, there became visible, at the corner of the slip, diagonally opposite to the spot in which the death's-head was delineated, the figure of what I at first supposed to be a goat. A closer scrutiny, however, satisfied me that it was intended for a kid."

"Ha! ha!" said I, "to be sure I have no right to laugh at you—a million and a half of money is too serious a matter for mirth—but you are not about to establish a third link in your chain—you will not find any especial connection between your pirates and a goat—pirates, you know, have nothing to do with goats; they appertain to the farming interest."

"But I have just said that the figure was *not* that of a goat."

"Well, a kid, then—pretty much the same thing."

"Pretty much, but not altogether," said Legrand. "You may have heard of one *Captain* Kidd. I at once looked upon the figure of the animal as a kind of punning or hieroglyphical signature. I say signature, because its position upon the vellum suggested this idea. The death's-head at the corner diagonally opposite, had, in the same manner, the

air of a stamp, or seal. But I was sorely put out by the absence of all else—of the body to my imagined instrument—of the text for my context."

"I presume you expected to find a letter between the stamp and the signature."

"Something of that kind. The fact is, I felt irresistibly impressed with a presentiment of some vast good fortune impending. I can scarcely say why. Perhaps, after all, it was rather a desire than an actual belief;—but do you know that Jupiter's silly words, about the bug being of solid gold, had a remarkable effect upon my fancy? And then the series of accidents and coincidences—these were so *very* extraordinary. Do you observe how mere an accident it was that these events should have occurred upon the *sole* day of all the year in which it has been, or may be sufficiently cool for fire, and that without the fire, or without the intervention of the dog at the precise moment in which he appeared, I should never have become aware of the death's-head, and so never the possessor of the treasure?"

"But proceed—I am all impatience."

"Well; you have heard, of course, the many stories current—the thousand vague rumors afloat about money buried, somewhere upon the Atlantic coast, by Kidd and his associates. These rumors must have had some foundation in fact. And that the rumors have existed so long and so continuously, could have resulted, it appeared to me, only from the circumstance of the buried treasure still *remaining* entombed. Had Kidd concealed his plunder for a time, and afterward reclaimed it, the rumors would scarcely have reached us in their present unvarying form. You will observe that the stories told are all about money-seekers, not about money-finders. Had the pirate recovered his money, there the affair would have dropped. It seemed to me that some accident—say the loss of a memorandum indicating its locality—had deprived him of the means of recovering it, and that this accident had become known to his followers who otherwise might never have heard that treasure had been concealed at all, and who, busying themselves in vain, because unguided, attempts to regain it, had given first birth, and then universal currency, to the reports which are now

so common. Have you ever heard of any important treasure being unearthed along the coast?"

"Never."

"But that Kidd's accumulations were immense, is well known. I took it for granted, therefore, that the earth still held them; and you will scarcely be surprised when I tell you that I felt a hope, nearly amounting to certainty, that the parchment so strangely found involved a lost record of the place of deposit."

"But how did you proceed?"

"I held the vellum again to the fire, after increasing the heat, but nothing appeared. I now thought it possible that the coating of dirt might have something to do with the failure: so I carefully rinsed the parchment by pouring warm water over it, and, having done this, I placed it in a tin pan, with the skull downward and put the pan upon a furnace of lighted charcoal. In a few minutes, the pan having become thoroughly heated, I removed the slip, and, to my inexpressible joy, found it spotted in several places, with what appeared to be figures arranged in lines. Again I placed it in the pan, and suffered it to remain another minute. Upon taking it off, the whole was just as you see it now."

Here Legrand, having reheated the parchment, submitted it to my inspection. The following characters were rudely traced in a red tint, between the death's-head and the goat:

"53‡‡†305))6*;4826)4‡.)4‡);806*;48†8¶60))85;1‡(::‡*8†83(88)5*†;46(;88*96*?;8)*‡(;485);5*†2:*‡(;4956*2(5*—4)8¶8*;4069285);)6†8)4‡‡;1(‡9;48081;8:8‡1;48†85;4)485†528806*81(‡9;48;(88;4(‡?34;48)4‡;161;:188;‡?;"

"But," said I, returning him the slip, "I am as much in the dark as ever. Were all the jewels of Golconda awaiting me upon my solution of this enigma, I am quite sure that I should be unable to earn them."

"And yet," said Legrand, "the solution is by no means so difficult as you might be led to imagine from the first hasty inspection of the characters. These characters, as any one might readily guess, form a cipher—that is to say, they convey a meaning; but then from what is known of Kidd,

I could not suppose him capable of constructing any of the more abstruse cryptographs. I made up my mind, at once, that this was of a simple species—such, however, as would appear, to the crude intellect of the sailor, absolutely insoluble without the key."

"And you really solved it?"

"Readily; I have solved others of an abstruseness ten thousand times greater. Circumstances, and a certain bias of mind, have led me to take interest in such riddles, and it may well be doubted whether human ingenuity can construct an enigma of the kind which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve. In fact, having once established connected and legible characters, I scarcely gave a thought to the mere difficulty of developing their import.

"In the present case—indeed, in all cases of secret writing—the first question regards the *language* of the cipher; for the principles of solution, so far, especially, as the more simple ciphers are concerned, depend upon, and are varied by, the genius of the particular idiom. In general, there is no alternative but experiment (directed by probabilities) of every tongue known to him who attempts the solution, until the true one be attained. But, with the cipher now before us all difficulty was removed by the signature. The pun upon the word 'Kidd' is appreciable in no other language than the English. But for this consideration I should have begun my attempts with Spanish and French, as the tongues in which a secret of this kind would most naturally have been written by a pirate of the Spanish main. As it was, I assumed the cryptograph to be English.

"You observe there are no divisions between the words. Had there been divisions the task would have been comparatively easy. In such cases I should have commenced with a collation and analysis of the shorter words, and, had a word of a single letter occurred, as is most likely (*a* or *I*, for example), I should have considered the solution as assured. But, there being no division, my first step was to ascertain the predominant letters, as well as the least frequent. Counting all, I constructed a table thus:

Of the characters	8	there are 33.
	;	" 26.
	4	" 19.
	‡)	" 16.
	*	" 13.
	5	" 12.
	6	" 11.
	†1	" 8.
	0	" 6.
	9 2	" 5.
	:3	" 4.
	?	" 3.
	¶	" 2.
	—.	" 1.

"Now, in English, the letter which most frequently occurs is *e*. Afterward, the succession runs thus: *a o i d h n r s t u y c f g l m w b k p q x z*. *E* predominates so remarkably that an individual sentence of any length is rarely seen in which it is not the prevailing character.

"Here, then, we have, in the very beginning, the groundwork for something more than a mere guess. The general use which may be made of the table is obvious—but, in this particular cipher, we shall only very partially require its aid. As our predominant character is 8, we will commence by assuming it as the *e* of the natural alphabet. To verify the supposition, let us observe if the 8 be seen often in couples —for *e* is doubled with great frequency in English—in such words, for example, as 'meet,' 'fleet,' 'speed,' 'seen,' 'been,' 'agree,' etc. In the present instance we see it doubled no less than five times, although the cryptograph is brief.

"Let us assume 8, then, as *e*. Now, of all *words* in the language, 'the' is most usual; let us see, therefore, whether there are not repetitions of any three characters, in the same order of collocation, the last of them being 8. If we discover repetitions of such letters, so arranged, they will most probably represent the word 'the.' Upon inspection, we find no less than seven such arrangements, the characters being ;48. We may, therefore, assume that ; represents *t*, 4 represents *h*, and 8 represents *e*—the last being now well confirmed. Thus a great step has been taken.

"But, having established a single word, we are enabled to establish a vastly important point; that is to say, several commencements and terminations of other words. Let us refer, for example, to the last instance but one, in which

the combination ;48 occurs—not far from the end of the cipher. We know that the ; immediately ensuing is the commencement of a word, and, of the six characters succeeding this 'the,' we are cognizant of no less than five. Let us set these characters down, thus, by the letters we know them to represent, leaving a space for the unknown—

t eeth.

"Here we are enabled, at once, to discard the *'th,'* as forming no portion of the word commencing with the first *t;* since, by experiment of the entire alphabet for a letter adapted to the vacancy, we perceive that no word can be formed of which this *th* can be a part. We are thus narrowed into

t ee,

and, going through the alphabet, if necessary, as before, we arrive at the word 'tree,' as the sole possible reading. We thus gain another letter, *r,* represented by (, with the words 'the tree' in juxtaposition.

"Looking beyond these words, for a short distance, we again see the combination ;48, and employ it by way of termination to what immediately precedes. We have thus this arrangement:

the tree ;4(‡?34 the,

or, substituting the natural letters, where known, it reads thus:

the tree thr‡?3h the.

"Now, if, in the place of the unknown characters, we leave blank spaces, or substitute dots, we read thus:

the tree thr...h the,

when the word 'through' makes itself evident at once. But this discovery gives us three new letters, *o, u,* and *g,* represented by ‡, ?, and 3.

"Looking now, narrowly, through the cipher for combinations of known characters, we find, not very far from the beginning, this arrangement,

83(88, or egree,
88

which plainly, is the conclusion of the word 'degree,' and gives us another letter, *d*, represented by †.

"Four letters beyond the word 'degree,' we perceive the combination

;46(;88*

"Translating the known characters, and representing the unknown by dots, as before, we read thus:

th.rtee,

an arrangement immediately suggestive of the word 'thirteen,' and again furnishing us with two new characters, *i* and *n*, represented by 6 and *.

"Referring, now, to the beginning of the cryptograph, we find the combination,

53‡‡†.

"Translating as before, we obtain

.good,

which assures us that the first letter is *A*, and that the first two words are 'A good.'

"It is now time that we arrange our key, as far as discovered, in a tabular form, to avoid confusion. It will stand thus:

5	represents	a
†	"	d
8	"	e
3	"	g
4	"	h
6	"	i
*	"	n
‡	"	o
(	"	r
;	"	t
?	"	u

"We have, therefore, no less than eleven of the most important letters represented, and it will be unnecessary to proceed with the details of the solution. I have said enough to convince you that ciphers of this nature are readily soluble, and to give you some insight into the *rationale* of their development. But be assured that the specimen before us appertains to the very simplest species of cryptograph. It now only remains to give you the full translation of the characters upon the parchment, as unriddled. Here it is:

"'A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes northeast and by north main branch seventh limb east side shoot from the left eye of the death's-head a bee-line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.'"

"But," said I, "the enigma seems still in as bad a condition as ever. How is it possible to extort a meaning from all this jargon about 'devil's seats,' 'death's-head,' and 'bishop's hotels?'"

"I confess," replied Legrand, "that the matter still wears a serious aspect, when regarded with a casual glance. My first endeavor was to divide the sentence into the natural division intended by the cryptographist."

"You mean, to punctuate it?"

"Something of that kind."

"But how was it possible to effect this?"

"I reflected that it had been a point with the writer to run his words together without division, so as to increase the difficulty of solution. Now, a not over-acute man, in pursuing such an object, would be nearly certain to overdo the matter. When, in the course of his composition, he arrived at a break in his subject which would naturally require a pause, or a point, he would be exceedingly apt to run his characters, at this place, more than usually close together. If you will observe the MS., in the present instance, you will easily detect five such cases of unusual crowding. Acting upon this hint, I made the division thus:

"'A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat—forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes—northeast and by north—main branch seventh limb east side—shoot from the left eye of the death's-head—a bee-line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.'"

"Even this division," said I, "leaves me still in the dark."

"It left me also in the dark," replied Legrand, "for a few days; during which I made diligent inquiry in the neighborhood of Sullivan's Island, for any building which went

by name of the 'Bishop's Hotel'; for, of course, I dropped the obsolete word 'hostel.' Gaining no information on the subject, I was on the point of extending my sphere of search, and proceeding in a more systematic manner, when, one morning, it entered into my head, quite suddenly, that this 'Bishop's Hostel' might have some reference to an old family, of the name of Bessop, which, time out of mind, had held possession of an ancient manor-house, about four miles to the northward of the island. I accordingly went over to the plantation, and reinstituted my inquiries among the older negroes of the place. At length one of the most aged of the women said that she had heard of such a place as Bessop's Castle, and thought that she could guide me to it, but that it was not a castle, nor a tavern, but a high rock.

"I offered to pay her well for her trouble, and, after some demur, she consented to accompany me to the spot. We found it without much difficulty, when, dismissing her, I proceeded to examine the place. The 'castle' consisted of an irregular assemblage of cliffs and rocks—one of the latter being quite remarkable for its height as well as for its insulated and artificial appearance. I clambered to its apex, and then felt much at a loss as to what should be next done.

"While I was busied in reflection, my eyes fell upon a narrow ledge in the eastern face of the rock, perhaps a yard below the summit upon which I stood. This ledge projected about eighteen inches, and was not more than a foot wide, while a niche in the cliff just above it gave it a rude resemblance to one of the hollow-backed chairs used by our ancestors. I made no doubt that here was the 'devil's-seat' alluded to in the MS., and now I seemed to grasp the full secret of the riddle.

"The 'good glass,' I knew, could have reference to nothing but a telescope; for the word 'glass' is rarely employed in any other sense by seamen. Now here, I at once saw, was a telescope to be used, and a definite point of view, admitting *no variation*, from which to use it. Nor did I hesitate to believe that the phrases, 'forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes,' and 'northeast and by north,' were intended as directions for the levelling of the glass. Greatly

excited by these discoveries, I hurried home, procured a telescope, and returned to the rock.

"I let myself down to the ledge, and found that it was impossible to retain a seat upon it except in one particular position. This fact confirmed my preconceived idea. I proceeded to use the glass. Of course, the 'forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes' could allude to nothing but elevation above the visible horizon, since the horizontal direction was clearly indicated by the words, 'northeast and by north.' This latter direction I at once established by means of a pocket-compass; then, pointing the glass as nearly at an angle of forty-one degrees of elevation as I could do it by guess, I moved it cautiously up or down, until my attention was arrested by a circular rift or opening in the foliage of a large tree that overtopped its fellows in the distance. In the centre of this rift I perceived a white spot, but could not, at first, distinguish what it was. Adjusting the focus of the telescope, I again looked, and now made it out to be a human skull.

"Upon this discovery I was so sanguine as to consider the enigma solved; for the phrase 'main branch, seventh limb, east side,' could refer only to the position of the skull upon the tree, while 'shoot from the left eye of the death's-head' admitted, also, of but one interpretation, in regard to a search for buried treasure. I perceived that the design was to drop a bullet from the left eye of the skull, and that a bee-line, or, in other words, a straight line, drawn from the nearest point of the trunk through the shot (or the spot where the bullet fell), and thence extended to a distance of fifty feet, would indicate a definite point—and beneath this point I thought it at least *possible* that a deposit of value lay concealed."

"All this," I said, "is exceedingly clear, and, although ingenious, still simple and explicit. When you left the Bishop's Hotel, what then?"

"Why, having carefully taken the bearings of the tree, I turned homeward. The instant that I left 'the devil's-seat,' however, the circular rift vanished; nor could I get a glimpse of it afterward, turn as I would. What seems to me the chief ingenuity in this whole business, is the fact (for re-

peated experiment has convinced me it *is* a fact) that the circular opening in question is visible from no other attainable point of view than that afforded by the narrow ledge upon the face of the rock.

"In this expedition to the 'Bishop's Hotel' I had been attended by Jupiter, who had, no doubt, observed, for some weeks past, the abstraction of my demeanor, and took especial care not to leave me alone. But, on the next day, getting up very early, I contrived to give him the slip, and went into the hills in search of the tree. After much toil I found it. When I came home at night my valet proposed to give me a flogging. With the rest of the adventure I believe you are as well acquainted as myself."

"I suppose," said I, "you missed the spot, in the first attempt at digging, through Jupiter's stupidity in letting the bug fall through the right instead of through the left eye of the skull."

"Precisely. This mistake made a difference of about two inches and a half in the 'shot'—that is to say, in the position of the peg nearest the tree; and had the treasure been *beneath* the 'shot,' the error would have been of little moment; but 'the shot,' together with the nearest point of the tree, were merely two points for the establishment of a line of direction; of course, the error, however trivial in the beginning, increased as we proceeded with the line, and by the time we had gone fifty feet threw us quite off the scent. But for my deep-seated impressions that treasure was here somewhere actually buried, we might have had all our labor in vain."

"But your grandiloquence, and your conduct in swinging the beetle—how excessively odd! I was sure you were mad. And why did you insist upon letting fall the bug, instead of a bullet, from the skull?"

"Why, to be frank, I felt somewhat annoyed by your evident suspicions touching my sanity, and so resolved to punish you quietly, in my own way, by a little bit of sober mystification. For this reason I swung the beetle, and for this reason I let it fall from the tree. An observation of yours about its great weight suggested the latter idea."

"Yes, I perceive; and now there is only one point which

puzzles me. What are we to make of the skeletons found in the hole?"

"That is a question I am no more able to answer than yourself. There seems, however, only one plausible way of accounting for them—and yet it is dreadful to believe in such atrocity as my suggestion would imply. It is clear that Kidd (if Kidd indeed secreted this treasure, which I doubt not)—it is clear that he must have had assistance in the labor. But, this labor concluded, he may have thought it expedient to remove all participants in his secret. Perhaps a couple of blows with a mattock were sufficient, while his coadjutors were busy in the pit; perhaps it required a dozen—who shall tell?"

CORPORAL FLINT'S MURDER

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HALF an hour passed after the execution of the missionary before the chiefs commenced their proceedings with the corporal. The delay was owing to a consultation, in which The Weasel had proposed despatching a party to the castle, to bring in the family, and thus make a common destruction of the remaining pale-faces known to be in that part of the Openings. Peter did not dare to oppose this scheme, himself; but he so managed as to get Crowsfeather to do it, without bringing himself into the foreground. The influence of the Pottawattamie prevailed, and it was decided to torture this one captive, and to secure his scalp, before they proceeded to work their will on the others. Ungque, who had gained ground rapidly by his late success, was once more commissioned to state to the captive the intentions of his captors.

"Brother," commenced The Weasel, placing himself directly in front of the corporal, "I am about to speak to you. A wise warrior opens his ears, when he hears the voice of his enemy. He may learn something it will be good for him to know. It will be good for you to know what I am about to say.

"Brother, you are a pale-face, and we are Injins. You wish to get our hunting-grounds, and we wish to keep them. To keep them, it has become necessary to take your scalp. I hope you are ready to let us have it."

The corporal had but an indifferent knowledge of the Indian language, but he comprehended all that was uttered on this occasion. Interest quickened his faculties, and no part of what was said was lost. The gentle, slow, deliberate manner in which The Weasel delivered himself, contributed to his means of understanding. He was fortunately prepared for what he heard, and the announcement of his approaching fate did not disturb him to the degree of betray-

ing weakness. This last was a triumph in which the Indians delighted, though they ever showed the most profound respect for such of their victims as manifested a manly fortitude. It was necessary to reply, which the corporal did in English, knowing that several present could interpret his words. With a view to render this the more easy, he spoke in fragments of sentences, and with great deliberation.

"Injins," returned the corporal, "you surrounded me, and I have been taken prisoner—had there been a platoon on us, you mightn't have made out quite so well. It's no great victory for three hundred warriors to overcome a single man. I count Parson Amen as worse than nothing, for he looked to neither rear nor flank. If I could have half an hour's work upon you, with only half of our late company, I think we should lower your conceit. But that is impossible, and so you may do just what you please with me. I ask no favors."

Although this answer was very imperfectly translated, it awakened a good deal of admiration. A man who could look death so closely in the face, with so much steadiness, became a sort of hero in Indian eyes; and with the North American savage, fortitude is a virtue not inferior to courage. Murmurs of approbation were heard, and Ungque was privately requested to urge the captive further, in order to see how far present appearances were likely to be maintained.

"Brother, I have said that we are Injins," resumed The Weasel, with an air so humble, and a voice so meek, that a stranger might have supposed he was consoling, instead of endeavoring to intimidate, the prisoner. "It is true. We are nothing but poor, ignorant Injins. We can only torment our prisoners after Injin fashion. If we were palefaces, we might do better. We did not torment the medicine-priest. We were afraid he would laugh at our mistakes. He knew a great deal. We know but little. We do as well as we know how.

"Brother, when Injins do as well as they know how, a warrior should forget their mistakes. We wish to torment you, in a way to prove that you are all over man. We wish

so to torment you that you will stand up under the pain in such a way that it will make our young men think your mother was not a squaw—that there is no woman in you. We do this for our own honor, as well as for yours. It will be an honor to us to have such a captive; it will be an honor to you to be such a captive. We shall do as well as we know how.

"Brother, it is most time to begin. The tormenting will last a long time. We must not let the medicine-priest get too great a start on the path to the happy hunting-grounds of your——"

Here, a most unexpected interruption occurred, that effectually put a stop to the eloquence of Ungque. In his desire to make an impression, the savage approached within reach of the captive's arm, while his own mind was intent on the words that he hoped would make the prisoner quail. The corporal kept his eye on that of the speaker, charming him, as it were, into a riveted gaze, in return. Watching his opportunity, he caught the tomahawk from the Weasel's belt, and by a single blow, felled him dead at his feet. Not content with this, the old soldier now bounded forward, striking right and left, inflicting six or eight wounds on others, before he could be again arrested, disarmed, and bound. While the last was doing, Peter withdrew, unobserved.

Many were the "hughs" and other exclamations of admiration that succeeded this display of desperate manhood! The body of The Weasel was removed, and interred, while the wounded withdrew to attend to their hurts; leaving the arena to the rest assembled there. As for the corporal, he was pretty well blown, and, in addition to being now bound hand and foot, his recent exertions, which were terrific while they lasted, effectually incapacitated him from making any move, so long as he was thus exhausted and confined.

A council was now held by the principal chiefs. Ungque had few friends. In this, he shared the fate of most demagogues, who are commonly despised even by those they lead and deceive. No one regretted him much, and some were actually glad at his fate. But the dignity of the conquerors must be vindicated. It would never do to allow a pale-face

to obtain so great an advantage, and not take a signal vengeance for his deeds. After a long consultation, it was determined to subject the captive to the trial by saplings, and thus see if he could bear the torture without complaining. As some of our readers may not understand what this fell mode of tormenting is, it may be necessary to explain.

There is scarcely a method of inflicting pain, that comes within the compass of their means, that the North American Indians have not essayed on their enemies. When the infernal ingenuity that is exercised on these occasions fails of its effect, the captives themselves have been heard to suggest other means of torturing that *they* have known practised successfully by their own people. There is often a strange strife between the tormentors and the tormented; the one to manifest skill in inflicting pain, and the other to manifest fortitude in enduring it. As has just been said, quite as much renown is often acquired by the warrior, in setting all the devices of his conquerors at defiance, while subject to their hellish attempts, as in deeds of arms. It might be more true to say that such *was* the practice among the Indians, than to say, at the present time, that such *is;* for it is certain that civilization in its approaches, while it has in many particulars even degraded the red man, has had a silent effect in changing and mitigating many of his fiercer customs—this, perhaps, among the rest. It is probable that the more distant tribes still resort to all these ancient usages; but it is both hoped and believed that those nearer to the whites do not.

The "torture by saplings" is one of those modes of inflicting pain that would naturally suggest themselves to savages. Young trees that do not stand far apart are trimmed of their branches, and brought nearer to each other by bending their bodies; the victim is then attached to both trunks, sometimes by his extended arms, at others by his legs, or by whatever part of the frame cruelty can suggest, when the saplings are released, and permitted to resume their upright positions. Of course, the sufferer is lifted from the earth, and hangs suspended by his limbs, with a strain on them that soon produces the most intense anguish. The celebrated punishment of the "knout" partakes a good

deal of this same character of suffering. Bough of the Oak now approached the corporal, to let him know how high an honor was in reserve for him.

"Brother," said this ambitious orator, "you are a brave warrior. You have done well. Not only have you killed one of our chiefs, but you have wounded several of our young men. No one but a brave could have done this. You have forced us to bind you, lest you might kill some more. It is not often that captives do this. Your courage has caused us to consult *how* we might best torture you, in a way most to manifest your manhood. After talking together, the chiefs have decided that a man of your firmness ought to be hung between two young trees. We have found the trees, and have cut off their branches. You can see them. If they were a little larger their force would be greater, and they would give you more pain—would be more worthy of you; but these are the largest saplings we could find. Had there been any larger, we would have let you have them. We wish to do you honor, for you are a bold warrior, and worthy to be well tormented.

"Brother, look at these saplings! They are tall and straight. When they are bent by many hands, they will come together. Take away the hands, and they will become straight again. Your arms must then keep them together. We wish we had some pappooses here, that they might shoot arrows into your flesh. That would help much to torment you. You cannot have this honor, for we have no pappooses. We are afraid to let our young men shoot arrows into your flesh. They are strong, and might kill you. We wish you to die between the saplings, as is your right, being so great a brave.

"Brother, we think much better of you since you killed The Weasel, and hurt our young men. If all your warriors at Chicago had been as bold as you, Black-Bird would not have taken that fort. You would have saved many scalps. This encourages us. It makes us think the Great Spirit means to help us, and that we shall kill all the pale-faces. When we get further into your settlements, we do not expect to meet many such braves as you. They tell us we shall then find men who will run, and screech like women. It

will not be a pleasure to torment such men. We had rather torment a bold warrior, like you, who makes us admire him for his manliness. We love our squaws, but not in the war-path. They are best in the lodges; here we want nothing but men. You are a man—a brave—we honor you. We think, notwithstanding, we shall yet make you weak. It will not be easy, yet we hope to do it. We shall try. We may not think quite so well of you, if we do it; but we shall always call you a brave. A man is not a stone. We can all feel, and when we have done all that is in our power, no one can do more. It is so with Injins; we think it must be so with pale-faces. We mean to try and see how it is."

The corporal understood very little of this harangue, though he perfectly comprehended the preparations of the saplings, and Bough of the Oak's allusions to *them*. He was in a cold sweat at the thought, for resolute as he was, he foresaw sufferings that human fortitude could hardly endure. In this state of the case, and in the frame of mind he was in, he had recourse to an expedient of which he had often heard, and which he thought might now be practised to some advantage. It was to open upon the savages with abuse, and to exasperate them, by taunts and sarcasm, to such a degree as might induce some of the weaker members of the tribe to dispatch him on the spot. As the corporal, with the perspective of the saplings before his eyes, manifested a good deal of ingenuity on this occasion, we shall record some of his efforts.

"D'ye call yourselves chiefs and warriors?" he began, upon a pretty high key. "I call ye squaws! There is not a man among ye. Dogs would be the best name. You are poor Injins. A long time ago, the pale-faces came here in two or three little canoes. They were but a handful, and you were plentier than prairie wolves. Your bark could be heard throughout the land. Well, what did this handful of pale-faces? It drove your fathers before them, until they got all the best of the hunting-grounds. Not an Injin of you all, now, ever get down on the shores of the great salt lake, unless to sell brooms and baskets, and then he goes sneaking like a wolf after a sheep. You have forgotten how clams and oysters taste. Your fathers had as many of

them as they could eat; but not one of *you* ever tasted them. The pale-faces eat them all. If an Injun asked for one, they would throw the shell at his head, and call him a dog.

"Do you think that my chiefs would hang one of you between two such miserable saplings as these? No! They would scorn to practice such pitiful torture. They would bring the tops of two tall pines together, trees a hundred and fifty feet high, and put their prisoner on the topmost boughs, for the crows and ravens to pick his eyes out. But you are miserable Injins! You know nothing. If you know'd any better, would you act such poor torment ag'in' a great brave? I spit upon ye, and call you squaws. The pale-faces have made women of ye. They have taken out your hearts, and put pieces of dog's flesh in their places."

Here the corporal, who delivered himself with an animation suited to his language, was obliged to pause, literally for want of breath. Singular as it may seem, this tirade excited great admiration among the savages. It is true, that very few understood what was said; perhaps no one understood *all,* but the manner was thought to be admirable. When some of the language was interpreted a deep but smothered resentment was felt; more especially at the taunts touching the manner in which the whites had overcome the red men. Truth is hard to be borne, and the individual, or people, who will treat a thousand injurious lies with contempt, feel all their ire aroused at one reproach that has its foundation in fact. Nevertheless, the anger that the corporal's words did, in truth, awaken, was successfully repressed, and he had the disappointment of seeing that his life was spared for the torture.

"Brother," said Bough of the Oak, again placing himself before the captive, "you have a stout heart. It is made of stone, and not of flesh. If our hearts be of dog's meat, yours is of stone. What you say is true. The pale-faces *did* come at first in two or three canoes, and there were but few of them. We are ashamed, for it is true. A few pale-faces drove toward the setting sun many Injins. But we cannot be driven any further. We mean to stop here, and begin to take all the scalps we can. A great chief, who belongs to no one tribe, but belongs to all tribes, who

speaks all tongues, has been sent by the Great Spirit to arouse us. He has done it. You know him. He came from the head of the lake with you, and kept his eye on your scalp. He has meant to take it from the first. He waited only for an opportunity. That opportunity has come, and we now mean to do as he has told us we ought to do. This is right. Squaws are in a hurry; warriors know how to wait. We would kill you at once, and hang your scalp on our pole, but it would not be right. We wish to do what is right. If we *are* poor Injins, and know but little, we know what is right. It is right to torment so great a brave, and we mean to do it. It is only just to you to do so. An old warrior who has seen so many enemies, and who has so big a heart, ought not to be knocked in the head like a pappoose or a squaw. It is his right to be tormented. We are getting ready, and shall soon begin. If my brother can tell us a new way of tormenting, we are willing to try it. Should we not make out as well as pale-faces, my brother will remember who we are. We mean to do our best, and we hope to make his heart soft. If we do this, great will be our honor. Should we not do it, we cannot help it. We shall try."

It was now the corporal's turn to put in a rebutter. This he did without any failure in will or performance. By this time he was so well warmed as to think or care very little about the saplings, and to overlook the pain they might occasion.

"Dogs can do little but bark; 'specially Injin dogs," he said. "Injins themselves are little better than their own dogs. They can bark, but they don't know how to bite. You have many great chiefs here. Some are panthers, and some bears, and some buffaloes; but where are your weasels? I have fit you now these twenty years, and never have I known ye to stand up to the baggonet. It's not Injin natur' to do *that*."

Here the corporal, without knowing it, made some such reproach to the aboriginal warriors of America as the English used to throw into the teeth of ourselves—that of not standing up to a weapon which neither party possessed. It was matter of great triumph that the Americans would not

stand the charge of the bayonet at the renowned fight on Breed's, for instance, when it is well known that not one man in five among the colonists had any such weapon at all to "stand up" with. A different story was told at Guildford, and Stony Point, and Eutaw, and Bennington, and Bemis' Heights, and fifty other places that might be named, after the troops were furnished with bayonets. *Then* it was found that the Americans could use them as well as others, and so might it have proved with the red men, though their discipline, or mode of fighting, scarce admitted of such systematic charges. All this, however, the corporal overlooked, much as if he were a regular historian who was writing to make out a case.

"Harkee, brother, since you *will* call me brother; though, Heaven be praised, not a drop of nigger or Injin blood runs in *my* veins," resumed the corporal. "Harken, friend redskin, answer me one thing. Did you ever hear of such a man as Mad Anthony? He was the tickler for your infernal tribes! You pulled no saplings together for him. He put you up with 'the long-knives and leather-stockings,' and you outrun his fleetest horses. I was with him, and saw more naked backs than naked faces among your people, that day. Your Great Bear got a rap on his nose that sent him to his village yelping like a cur."

Again was the corporal compelled to stop to take breath. The allusion to Wayne, and his defeat of the Indians, excited so much ire, that several hands grasped knives and tomahawks, and one arrow was actually drawn nearly to the head; but the frown of Bear's Meat prevented any outbreak, or actual violence. It was deemed prudent, however, to put an end to this scene, lest the straightforward corporal, who laid it on heavily, and who had so much to say about Indian defeats, might actually succeed in touching some festering wound that would bring him to his death at once. It was, accordingly, determined to proceed with the torture of the saplings without further delay.

The corporal was removed accordingly, and placed between the two bended trees, which were kept together by withes around their tops. An arm of the captive was bound tightly at the wrist to the top of each tree, so that his limbs

were to act as the only tie between the saplings, as soon as the withes should be cut. The Indians now worked in silence, and the matter was getting to be much too serious for the corporal to indulge in any more words. The cold sweat returned, and many an anxious glance was cast by the veteran on the fell preparations. Still he maintained appearances, and when all was ready, not a man there was aware of the agony of dread which prevailed in the breast of the victim. It was not death that he feared as much as suffering. A few minutes, the corporal well knew, would make the pain intolerable, while he saw no hope of putting a speedy end to his existence. A man might live hours in such a situation. Then it was that the teachings of childhood were revived in the bosom of this hardened man, and he remembered the Being that died for *him,* in common with the rest of the human race, on the tree. The seeming similarity of his own execution struck his imagination, and brought a tardy but faint recollection of those lessons that had lost most of their efficacy in the wickedness and impiety of camps. His soul struggled for relief in that direction, but the present scene was too absorbing to admit of its lifting itself so far above his humanity.

"Warrior of the pale-faces," said Bough of the Oak, "we are going to cut the withes. You will then be where a brave man will want all his courage. If you are firm, we will do you honor; if you faint and screech, our young men will laugh at you. This is the way with Injins. They honor braves; they point the finger at cowards."

Here a sign was made by Bear's Meat, and a warrior raised the tomahawk that was to separate the fastenings. His hand was in the very act of descending, when the crack of a rifle was heard, and a little smoke rose out of the thicket, near the spot where the bee-hunter and the corporal, himself, had remained so long hid, on the occasion of the council first held in that place. The tomahawk fell, however, the withes were parted, and up flew the saplings, with a violence that threatened to tear the arms of the victim out of their sockets.

The Indians listened, expecting the screeches and groans; —they gazed, hoping to witness the writhings of their cap-

tive. But they were disappointed. There hung the body, its arms distended, still holding the tops of the saplings bowed, but not a sign of life was seen. A small line of blood trickled down the forehead, and above it was the nearly imperceptible hole made by the passage of a bullet. The head itself had fallen forward, and a little on one shoulder. The corporal had escaped the torments reserved for him, by this friendly blow.

UNCLE JIM AND UNCLE BILLY

BY BRET HARTE

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THEY were partners. The avuncular title was bestowed on them by Cedar Camp, possibly in recognition of a certain matured good humor, quite distinct from the spasmodic exuberant spirits of its other members, and possibly from what, to its youthful sense, seemed their advanced ages—which must have been at least forty! They had also set habits even in their improvidence, lost incalculable and unpayable sums to each other over euchre regularly every evening, and inspected their sluice-boxes punctually every Saturday for repairs —which they never made. They even got to resemble each other, after the fashion of old married couples, or, rather, as in matrimonial partnerships, were subject to the domination of the stronger character; although in their case it is to be feared that it was the feminine Uncle Billy—enthusiastic, imaginative, and loquacious—who swayed the masculine, steady-going, and practical Uncle Jim. They had lived in the camp since its foundation in 1849; there seemed to be no reason why they should not remain there until its inevitable evolution into a mining town. The younger members might leave through restless ambition or a desire for change or novelty; they were subject to no such trifling mutation. Yet Cedar Camp was surprised one day to hear that Uncle Billy was going away.

The rain was softly falling on the bark thatch of the cabin with a muffled murmur, like a sound heard through sleep. The southwest trades were warm even at that altitude, as the open door testified, although a fire of pine bark was flickering on the adobe hearth and striking out answering fires from the freshly scoured culinary utensils on the rude sideboard, which Uncle Jim had cleaned that morning with his usual serious persistency. Their best

From "Stories in Light and Shadow." Copyright 1888 and 1889 by Bret Harte.

clothes, which were interchangeable and worn alternately by each other on festal occasions, hung on the walls, which were covered with a coarse sailcloth canvas instead of lath-and-plaster, and were diversified by pictures from illustrated papers and stains from the exterior weather. Two "bunks," like ships' berths,—an upper and lower one,—occupied the gable-end of this single apartment, and on beds of coarse sacking, filled with dry moss, were carefully rolled their respective blankets and pillows. They were the only articles not used in common, and whose individuality was respected.

Uncle Jim, who had been sitting before the fire, rose as the square bulk of his partner appeared at the doorway with an armful of wood for the evening stove. By that sign he knew it was nine o'clock: for the last six years Uncle Billy had regularly brought in the wood at that hour, and Uncle Jim had as regularly closed the door after him, and set out their single table, containing a greasy pack of cards taken from its drawer, a bottle of whiskey, and two tin drinking-cups. To this was added a ragged memorandum-book and a stick of pencil. The two men drew their stools to the table.

"Hol' on a minit," said Uncle Billy.

His partner laid down the cards as Uncle Billy extracted from his pocket a pill-box, and, opening it, gravely took a pill. This was clearly an innovation on their regular proceedings, for Uncle Billy was always in perfect health.

"What's this for?" asked Uncle Jim half scornfully.

"Agin ager."

"You ain't got no ager," said Uncle Jim, with the assurance of intimate cognizance of his partner's physical condition.

"But it's a pow'ful preventive! Quinine! Saw this box at Riley's store, and laid out a quarter on it. We kin keep it here, comfortable, for evenings. It's mighty soothin' arter a man's done a hard day's work on the river-bar. Take one."

Uncle Jim gravely took a pill and swallowed it, and handed the box back to his partner.

"We'll leave it on the table, sociable like, in case any of

the boys come in," said Uncle Billy, taking up the cards. "Well. How de we stand?"

Uncle Jim consulted the memorandum-book. "You were owin' me sixty-two thousand dollars on the last game, and the limit's seventy-five thousand!"

"Je whillikins!" ejaculated Uncle Billy. "Let me see."

He examined the book, feebly attempted to challenge the additions, but with no effect on the total. "We oughter hev made the limit a hundred thousand," he said seriously; "seventy-five thousand is only triflin' in a game like ours. And you've set down my claim at Angel's?" he continued.

"I allowed you ten thousand dollars for that," said Uncle Jim, with equal gravity, "and it's a fancy price too."

The claim in question being an unprospected hillside ten miles distant, which Uncle Jim had never seen, and Uncle Billy had not visited for years, the statement was probably true; nevertheless, Uncle Billy retorted:—

"Ye kin never tell how these things will pan out. Why, only this mornin' I was taking a turn round Shot Up Hill, that ye know is just rotten with quartz and gold, and I couldn't help thinkin' how much it was like my ole claim at Angel's. I must take a day off to go on there and strike a pick in it, if only for luck."

Suddenly he paused and said, "Strange, ain't it, you should speak of it to-night? Now I call that queer!"

He laid down his cards and gazed mysteriously at his companion. Uncle Jim knew perfectly that Uncle Billy had regularly once a week for many years declared his final determination to go over to Angel's and prospect his claim, yet nevertheless he half responded to his partner's suggestion of mystery, and a look of fatuous wonder crept into his eyes. But he contented himself by saying cautiously, "You spoke of it first."

"That's the more sing'lar," said Uncle Billy confidently. "And I've been thinking about it, and kinder seeing myself thar all day. It's mighty queer!" He got up and began to rummage among some torn and coverless books in the corner.

"Where's that 'Dream Book' gone to?"

"The Carson boys borrowed it," replied Uncle Jim.

"Anyhow, yours wasn't no dream—only a kind o' vision, and the book don't take no stock in visions." Nevertheless, he watched his partner with some sympathy, and added, "That reminds me that I had a dream the other night of being in 'Frisco at a small hotel, with heaps o' money, and all the time being sort o' scared and bewildered over it."

"No?" queried his partner eagerly yet reproachfully. "You never let on anything about it to *me!* It's mighty queer you havin' these strange feelin's, for I've had 'em myself. And only to-night, comin' up from the spring, I saw two crows hopping in the trail, and I says, 'If I see another, it's luck, sure!' And you'll think I'm lyin', but when I went to the wood-pile just now there was the *third* one sittin' up on a log as plain as I see you. Tell 'e what folks ken laugh—but that's just what Jim Filgee saw the night before he made the big strike!"

They were both smiling, yet with an underlying credulity and seriousness as singularly pathetic as it seemed incongruous to their years of intelligence. Small wonder, however, that in their occupation and environment—living daily in an atmosphere of hope, expectation, and chance, looking forward each morning to the blind stroke of a pick that might bring fortune—they should see signs in nature and hear mystic voices in the trackless woods that surrounded them. Still less strange that they were peculiarly susceptible to the more recognized diversions of chance, and were gamblers on the turning of a card who trusted to the revelation of a shovelful of upturned earth.

It was quite natural, therefore, that they should return from their abstract form of divination to the table and their cards. But they were scarcely seated before they heard a crackling step in the brush outside, and the free latch of their door was lifted. A younger member of the camp entered. He uttered a peevish "Halloo!" which might have passed for a greeting, or might have been a slight protest at finding the door closed, drew the stool from which Uncle Jim had just risen before the fire, shook his wet clothes like a Newfoundland dog, and sat down. Yet he was by no means churlish nor coarse-looking, and this act was rather one of easy-going, selfish, youthful familiarity than of

rudeness. The cabin of Uncles Billy and Jim was considered a public right or "common" of the camp. Conferences between individual miners were appointed there. "I'll meet you at Uncle Billy's" was a common tryst. Added to this was a tacit claim upon the partners' arbitrative powers, or the equal right to request them to step outside if the interviews were of a private nature. Yet there was never any objection on the part of the partners, and to-night there was not a shadow of resentment of this intrusion in the patient, good-humored, tolerant eyes of Uncles Jim and Billy as they gazed at their guest. Perhaps there was a slight gleam of relief in Uncle Jim's when he found that the guest was unaccompanied by any one, and that it was not a tryst. It would have been unpleasant for the two partners to have stayed out in the rain while their guests were exchanging private confidences in their cabin. While there might have been no limit to their good will, there might have been some to their capacity for exposure.

Uncle Jim drew a huge log from beside the hearth and sat on the driest end of it, while their guest occupied the stool. The young man, without turning away from his discontented, peevish brooding over the fire, vaguely reached backward for the whiskey-bottle and Uncle Billy's tin cup, to which he was assisted by the latter's hospitable hand. But on setting down the cup his eye caught sight of the pill-box.

"Wot's that?" he said, with gloomy scorn. "Rat poison?"

"Quinine pills—agin ager," said Uncle Jim. "The newest thing out. Keeps out damp like Injin-rubber! Take one to follow yer whiskey. Me and Uncle Billy wouldn't think o' settin' down, quiet like, in the evening arter work, without 'em. Take one—ye'r welcome! We keep 'em out here for the boys."

Accustomed as the partners were to adopt and wear each other's opinions before folks, as they did each other's clothing, Uncle Billy was, nevertheless, astonished and delighted at Uncle Jim's enthusiasm over *his* pills. The guest took one and swallowed it.

"Mighty bitter!" he said, glancing at his hosts with

the quick Californian suspicion of some practical joke. But the honest faces of the partners reassured him.

"That bitterness ye taste," said Uncle Jim quickly, "is whar the thing's gittin' in its work. Sorter sickenin' the malaria—and kinder water-proofin' the insides all to onct and at the same lick! Don't yer see? Put another in yer vest pocket; you'll be cryin' for 'em like a child afore ye get home. Thar! Well, how's things agoin' on your claim, Dick? Boomin', eh?"

The guest raised his head and turned it sufficiently to fling his answer back over his shoulder at his hosts. "I don't know what *you'd* call 'boomin','" he said gloomily; "I suppose you two men sitting here comfortably by the fire, without caring whether school keeps or not, would call two feet of backwater over one's claim 'boomin';' I reckon *you'd* consider a hundred and fifty feet of sluicing carried away, and drifting to thunder down the South Fork, something in the way of advertising to your old camp! I suppose *you'd* think it was an inducement to investors! I shouldn't wonder," he added still more gloomily, as a sudden dash of rain down the wide-throated chimney dropped in his tin cup—"and it would be just like you two chaps, sittin' there gormandizing over your quinine—if yer said this rain that's lasted three weeks was something to be proud of!"

It was the cheerful and the satisfying custom of the rest of the camp, for no reason whatever, to hold Uncle Jim and Uncle Billy responsible for its present location, its vicissitudes, the weather, or any convulsion of nature; and it was equally the partners' habit, for no reason whatever, to accept these animadversions and apologize.

"It's a rain that's soft and mellowin'," said Uncle Billy gently, "and supplin' to the sinews and muscles. Did ye ever notice, Jim"—ostentatiously to his partner—"did ye ever notice that you get inter a kind o' sweaty lather workin' in it? Sorter openin' to the pores!"

"Fetches 'em every time," said Uncle Billy. "Better nor fancy soap."

Their guest laughed bitterly. "Well, I'm going to leave it to you. I reckon to cut the whole concern to-morrow,

and 'lite' out for something new. It can't be worse than this."

The two partners looked grieved, albeit they were accustomed to these outbursts. Everybody who thought of going away from Cedar Camp used it first as a threat to these patient men, after the fashion of runaway nephews, or made an exemplary scene of their going.

"Better think twice afore ye go," said Uncle Billy.

"I've seen worse weather afore ye came," said Uncle Jim slowly. "Water all over the Bar; the mud so deep ye couldn't get to Angel's for a sack o' flour, and we had to grub on pine nuts and jackass-rabbits. And yet—we stuck by the camp, and here we are!"

The mild answer apparently goaded their guest to fury. He rose from his seat, threw back his long dripping hair from his handsome but querulous face, and scattered a few drops on the partners. "Yes, that's just it. That's what gets me! Here you stick, and here you are! And here you'll stick and rust until you starve or drown! Here you are,—two men who ought to be out in the world, playing your part as grown men,—stuck here like children 'playing house' in the woods; playing work in your wretched mud-pie ditches, and content. Two men not so old that you mightn't be taking your part in the fun of the world, going to balls or theaters, or paying attention to girls, and yet old enough to have married and have your families around you, content to stay in this God-forsaken place; old bachelors, pigging together like poor-house paupers. That's what gets me! Say you like *it?* Say you expect by hanging on to make a strike—and what does that amount to? What are *your* chances? How many of us have made, or are making, more than grub wages? Say you're willing to share and share alike as you do—have you got enough for two? Aren't you actually living off each other? Aren't you grinding each other down, choking each other's struggles, as you sink together deeper and deeper in the mud of this cussed camp? And while you're doing this, aren't you, by your age and position here, holding out hopes to others that you know cannot be fulfilled?"

Accustomed as they were to the half-querulous, half-

humorous, but always extravagant, criticism of the others, there was something so new in this arraignment of themselves that the partners for a moment sat silent. There was a slight flush on Uncle Billy's cheek, there was a slight paleness on Uncle Jim's. He was the first to reply. But he did so with a certain dignity which neither his partner nor their guest had ever seen on his face before.

"As it's *our* fire that's warmed ye up like this, Dick Bullen," he said, slowly rising, with his hand resting on Uncle Billy's shoulder, "and as it's *our* whiskey that's loosened your tongue, I reckon we must put up with what ye'r' saying, just as we've managed to put up with our own way o' living, and not quo'll with ye under our own roof."

The young fellow saw the change in Uncle Jim's face and quickly extended his hand, with an apologetic backward shake of his long hair. "Hang it all, old man," he said, with a laugh of mingled contrition and amusement, "you mustn't mind what I said just now. I've been so worried thinking of things about *myself,* and, maybe, a little about you, that I quite forgot I hadn't a call to preach to anybody—least of all to you. So we part friends, Uncle Jim, and you too, Uncle Billy, and you'll forget what I said. In fact, I don't know why I spoke at all—only I was passing your claim just now, and wondering how much longer your old sluice-boxes would hold out, and where in thunder you'd get others when they caved in! I reckon that sent me off. That's all, old chap!"

Uncle Billy's face broke into a beaming smile of relief, and it was his hand that first grasped his guest's; Uncle Jim quickly followed with as honest a pressure, but with eyes that did not seem to be looking at Bullen, though all trace of resentment had died out of them. He walked to the door with him, again shook hands, but remained looking out in the darkness some time after Dick Bullen's tangled hair and broad shoulders had disappeared.

Meantime, Uncle Billy had resumed his seat and was chuckling and reminiscent as he cleaned out his pipe.

"Kinder reminds me of Jo Sharp, when he was cleaned out at poker by his own partners in his own cabin, comin'

up here and bedevilin' *us* about it! What was it you lint him?"

But Uncle Jim did not reply; and Uncle Billy, taking up the cards, began to shuffle them, smiling vaguely, yet at the same time somewhat painfully. "Arter all, Dick was mighty cut up about what he said, and I felt kinder sorry for him. And, you know, I rather cotton to a man that speaks his mind. Sorter clears him out, you know, of all the slumgullion that's in him. It's just like washin' out a pan o' prospecting: you pour in the water, and keep slushing it round and round, and out comes first the mud and dirt, and then the gravel, and then the black sand, and then—it's all out, and there's a speck o' gold glistenin' at the bottom!"

"Then you think there *was* suthin' in what he said?" said Uncle Jim, facing about slowly.

An odd tone in his voice made Uncle Billy look up. "No," he said quickly, shying with the instinct of an easy pleasure-loving nature from a possible grave situation. "No, I don't think he ever got the color! But wot are ye moonin' about for? Ain't ye goin' to play? It's mor' 'n half past nine now."

Thus adjured, Uncle Jim moved up to the table and sat down, while Uncle Billy dealt the cards, turning up the Jack or right bower—but *without* that exclamation of delight which always accompanied his good fortune, nor did Uncle Jim respond with the usual corresponding simulation of deep disgust. Such a circumstance had not occurred before in the history of their partnership. They both played in silence —a silence only interrupted by a larger splash of raindrops down the chimney.

"We orter put a couple of stones on the chimney-top, edgewise, like Jack Curtis does. It keeps out the rain without interferin' with the draft," said Uncle Billy musingly.

"What's the use if"—

"If what?" said Uncle Billy quietly.

"If we don't make it broader," said Uncle Jim half wearily.

They both stared at the chimney, but Uncle Jim's eye followed the wall around to the bunks. There were many

discolorations on the canvas, and a picture of the Goddess of Liberty from an illustrated paper had broken out in a kind of damp, measly eruption. "I'll stick that funny handbill of the 'Washin' Soda' I got at the grocery store the other day right over the Liberty gal. It's a mighty perty woman washin' with short sleeves," said Uncle Billy. "That's the comfort of them picters, you kin always get somethin' new, and it adds thickness to the wall."

Uncle Jim went back to the cards in silence. After a moment he rose again, and hung his overcoat against the door.

"Wind's comin' in," he said briefly.

"Yes," said Uncle Billy cheerfully, "but it wouldn't seem nat'ral if there wasn't that crack in the door to let the sunlight in o' mornin's. Makes a kind o' sundial, you know. When the streak o' light's in that corner, I says 'six o'clock!' when it's across the chimney I say 'seven!' and so 'tis!"

It certainly had grown chilly, and the wind was rising. The candle guttered and flickered; the embers on the hearth brightened occasionally, as if trying to dispel the gathering shadows, but always ineffectually. The game was frequently interrupted by the necessity of stirring the fire. After an interval of gloom, in which each partner successively drew the candle to his side to examine his cards, Uncle Jim said:—

"Say?"

"Well!" responded Uncle Billy.

"Are you sure you saw that third crow on the woodpile?"

"Sure as I see you now—and a darned sight plainer. Why?"

"Nothin', I was just thinkin'. Look here! How do we stand now?"

Uncle Billy was still losing. "Nevertheless," he said cheerfully, "I'm owin' you a matter of sixty thousand dollars."

Uncle Jim examined the book abstractedly. "Suppose," he said slowly, but without looking at his partner, "suppose,

as it's gettin' late now, we play for my half share of the claim agin the limit—seventy thousand—to square up."

"Your half share!" repeated Uncle Billy, with amused incredulity.

"My half share of the claim,—of this yer house, you know,—one-half of all that Dick Bullen calls our rotten starvation property," reiterated Uncle Jim, with a half smile.

Uncle Billy laughed. It was a novel idea; it was, of course, "all in the air," like the rest of their game, yet even then he had an odd feeling that he would have liked Dick Bullen to have known it. "Wade in, old pard," he said. "I'm on it."

Uncle Jim lit another candle to reinforce the fading light, and the deal fell to Uncle Billy. He turned up Jack of clubs. He also turned a little redder as he took up his cards, looked at them, and glanced hastily at his partner. "It's no use playing," he said. "Look here!" He laid down his cards on the table. They were the ace, king and queen of clubs, and Jack of spades,—or left bower,—which, with the turned-up Jack of clubs,—or right bower,—comprised *all* the winning cards!

"By jingo! If we'd been playin' fourhanded, say you an' me agin some other ducks, we'd have made 'four' in that deal, and h'isted some money—eh?" and his eyes sparkled. Uncle Jim, also, had a slight tremulous light in his own.

"Oh no! I didn't see no three crows this afternoon," added Uncle Billy gleefully, as his partner, in turn, began to shuffle the cards with laborious and conscientious exactitude. Then dealing, he turned up a heart for trumps. Uncle Billy took up his cards one by one, but when he had finished his face had become as pale as it had been red before. "What's the matter?" said Uncle Jim quickly, his own face growing white.

Uncle Billy slowly and with breathless awe laid down his cards, face up on the table. It was exactly the same sequence *in hearts,* with the knave of diamonds added. He could again take every trick.

They stared at each other with vacant faces and a half-drawn smile of fear. They could hear the wind moaning in

the trees beyond; there was a sudden rattling at the door. Uncle Billy started to his feet, but Uncle Jim caught his arm. *"Don't leave the cards!* It's only the wind; sit down," he said in a low awe-hushed voice, "it's your deal; you were two before, and two now, that makes you four; you've only one point to make to win the game. Go on."

They both poured out a cup of whiskey, smiling vaguely, yet with a certain terror in their eyes. Their hands were cold; the cards slipped from Uncle Billy's benumbed fingers; when he had shuffled them he passed them to his partner to shuffle them also, but did not speak. When Uncle Jim had shuffled them methodically he handed them back fatefully to his partner. Uncle Billy dealt them with a trembling hand. He turned up a club. "If you are sure of these tricks you know you've won," said Uncle Jim in a voice that was scarcely audible. Uncle Billy did not reply, but tremulously laid down the ace and right and left bowers.

He had won!

A feeling of relief came over each, and they laughed hysterically and discordantly. Ridiculous and childish as their contest might have seemed to a looker-on, to each the tension had been as great as that of the greatest gambler, without the gambler's trained restraint, coolness, and composure. Uncle Billy nervously took up the cards again.

"Don't," said Uncle Jim gravely; "it's no use—the luck's gone now."

"Just one more deal," pleaded his partner.

Uncle Jim looked at the fire, Uncle Billy hastily dealt, and threw the two hands face up on the table. They were the ordinary average cards. He dealt again, with the same result. "I told you so," said Uncle Jim, without looking up.

It certainly seemed a tame performance after their wonderful hands, and after another trial Uncle Billy threw the cards aside and drew his stool before the fire. "Mighty queer, warn't it?" he said, with reminiscent awe. "Three times running. Do you know, I felt a kind o' creepy feelin' down my back all the time. Criky! what luck! None of the boys would believe it if we told 'em—least of all that Dick Bullen, who don't believe in luck, anyway. Wonder

what he'd have said! and, Lord! how he'd have looked! Wall! what are you starin' so for?"

Uncle Jim had faced around, and was gazing at Uncle Billy's good-humored, simple face. "Nothin'!" he said briefly, and his eyes again sought the fire.

"Then don't look as if you was seein' suthin'—you give me the creeps," returned Uncle Billy a little petulantly. "Let's turn in, afore the fire goes out!"

The fateful cards were put back into the drawer, the table shoved against the wall. The operation of undressing was quickly got over, the clothes they wore being put on top of their blankets. Uncle Billy yawned, "I wonder what kind of a dream I'll have to-night—it oughter be suthin' to explain that luck." This was his "good-night" to his partner. In a few moments he was sound asleep.

Not so Uncle Jim. He heard the wind gradually go down, and in the oppressive silence that followed could detect the deep breathing of his companion and the far-off yelp of a coyote. His eyesight becoming accustomed to the semi-darkness, broken only by the scintillation of the dying embers of their fire, he could take in every detail of their sordid cabin and the rude environment in which they had lived so long. The dismal patches on the bark roof, the wretched makeshifts of each day, the dreary prolongation of discomfort, were all plain to him now, without the sanguine hope that had made them bearable. And when he shut his eyes upon them, it was only to travel in fancy down the steep mountain side that he had trodden so often to the dreary claim on the overflowed river, to the heaps of "tailings" that encumbered it, like empty shells of the hollow, profitless days spent there, which they were always waiting for the stroke of good fortune to clear away. He saw again the rotten "sluicing" through whose hopeless rifts and holes even their scant daily earnings had become scantier. At last he arose, and with infinite gentleness let himself down from his berth without disturbing his sleeping partner, and wrapping himself in his blanket, went to the door, which he noiselessly opened. From the position of a few stars that were glittering in the northern sky he knew that it was yet scarcely midnight; there were still long, rest-

less hours before the day! In the feverish state into which he had gradually worked himself it seemed to him impossible to wait the coming of the dawn.

But he was mistaken. For even as he stood there all nature seemed to invade his humble cabin with its free and fragrant breath, and invest him with its great companionship. He felt again, in that breath, that strange sense of freedom, that mystic touch of partnership with the birds and beasts, the shrubs and trees, in this greater home before him. It was this vague communion that had kept him there, that still held these world-sick, weary workers in their rude cabins on the slopes around him; and he felt upon his brow that balm that had nightly lulled him and them to sleep and forgetfulness. He closed the door, turned away, crept as noiselessly as before into his bunk again, and presently fell into a profound slumber.

But when Uncle Billy awoke the next morning he saw it was late; for the sun, piercing the crack of the closed door, was sending a pencil of light across the cold hearth, like a match to rekindle its dead embers. His first thought was of his strange luck the night before, and of disappointment that he had not had the dream of divination that he had looked for. He sprang to the floor, but as he stood upright his glance fell on Uncle Jim's bunk. It was empty. Not only that, but his *blankets*—Uncle Jim's own particular blankets —*were gone!*

A sudden revelation of his partner's manner the night before struck him now with the cruelty of a blow; a sudden intelligence, perhaps the very divination he had sought, flashed upon him like lightning! He glanced wildly around the cabin. The table was drawn out from the wall a little ostentatiously, as if to catch his eye. On it was lying the stained chamois-skin purse in which they had kept the few grains of gold remaining from their last week's "clean up." The grains had been carefully divided, and half had been taken! But near it lay the little memorandum-book, open, with the stick of pencil lying across it. A deep line was drawn across the page on which was recorded their imaginary extravagant gains and losses, even to the entry of Uncle Jim's half share of the claim which he had

risked and lost! Underneath were hurriedly scrawled the words:—

"Settled by *your* luck, last night, old pard.—James Foster."

It was nearly a month before Cedar Camp was convinced that Uncle Billy and Uncle Jim had dissolved partnership. Pride had prevented Uncle Billy from revealing his suspicions of the truth, or of relating the events that preceded Uncle Jim's clandestine flight, and Dick Bullen had gone to Sacramento by stage-coach the same morning. He briefly gave out that his partner had been called to San Francisco on important business of their own, that indeed might necessitate his own removal there later. In this he was singularly assisted by a letter from the absent Jim, dated at San Francisco, begging him not to be anxious about his success, as he had hopes of presently entering a profitable business, but with no further allusions to his precipitate departure, nor any suggestion of a reason for it. For two or three days Uncle Billy was staggered and bewildered; in his profound simplicity he wondered if his extraordinary good fortune that night had made him deaf to some explanation of his partner's, or, more terrible, if he had shown some "low" and incredible intimation of taking his partner's extravagant bet as real and binding. In this distress he wrote to Uncle Jim an appealing and apologetic letter, albeit somewhat incoherent and inaccurate, and bristling with misspelling, camp slang, and old partnership jibes. But to this elaborate epistle he received only Uncle Jim's repeated assurances of his own bright prospects, and his hopes that his old partner would be more fortunate, single-handed, on the old claim. For a whole week or two Uncle Billy sulked, but his invincible optimism and good humor got the better of him, and he thought only of his old partner's good fortune. He wrote him regularly, but always to one address —a box at the San Francisco post-office, which to the simple-minded Uncle Billy suggested a certain official importance. To these letters Uncle Jim responded regularly but briefly

From a certain intuitive pride in his partner and his affection, Uncle Billy did not show these letters openly to

the camp, although he spoke freely of his former partner's promising future, and even read them short extracts. It is needless to say that the camp did not accept Uncle Billy's story with unsuspecting confidence. On the contrary, a hundred surmises, humorous or serious, but always extravagant, were afloat in Cedar Camp. The partners had quarreled over their clothes—Uncle Jim, who was taller than Uncle Billy, had refused to wear his partner's trousers. They had quarrelled over cards—Uncle Jim had discovered that Uncle Billy was in possession of a "cold deck," or marked pack. They had quarrelled over Uncle Billy's carelessness in grinding up half a box of "bilious pills" in the morning's coffee. A gloomily imaginative mule-driver had darkly suggested that, as no one had really seen Uncle Jim leave the camp, he was still there, and his bones would yet be found in one of the ditches; while a still more credulous miner averred that what he had thought was the cry of a screech-owl the night previous to Uncle Jim's disappearance, might have been the agonized utterance of that murdered man. It was highly characteristic of that camp—and, indeed, of others in California—that nobody, not even the ingenious theorists themselves, believed their story, and that no one took the slightest pains to verify or disprove it. Happily, Uncle Billy never knew it, and moved all unconsciously in this atmosphere of burlesque suspicion. And then a singular change took place in the attitude of the camp towards him and the disrupted partnership. Hitherto, for no reason whatever, all had agreed to put the blame upon Billy—possibly because he was present to receive it. As days passed that slight reticence and dejection in his manner, which they had at first attributed to remorse and a guilty conscience, now began to tell as absurdly in his favor. Here was poor Uncle Billy toiling through the ditches, while his selfish partner was lolling in the lap of luxury in San Francisco! Uncle Billy's glowing accounts of Uncle Jim's success only contributed to the sympathy now fully given in his behalf and their execration of the absconding partner. It was proposed at Bigg's store that a letter expressing the indignation of the camp over his heartless conduct to his late partner, William Fall, should be forwarded to him. Con-

dolences were offered to Uncle Billy, and uncouth attempts were made to cheer his loneliness. A procession of half a dozen men twice a week to his cabin, carrying their own whiskey and winding up with a "stag dance" before the premises, was sufficient to lighten his eclipsed gayety and remind him of a happier past. "Surprise" working parties visited his claim with spasmodic essays towards helping him, and great good humor and hilarity prevailed. It was not an unusual thing for an honest miner to arise from an idle gathering in some cabin and excuse himself with the remark that he "reckoned he'd put in an hour's work in Uncle Billy's tailings!" And yet, as before, it was very improbable if any of these reckless benefactors *really* believed in their own earnestness or in the gravity of the situation. Indeed, a kind of hopeful cynicism ran through their performances. "Like as not, Uncle Billy is still in 'cahoots' (*i. e.,* shares) with his old pard, and is just laughin' at us as he's sendin' him accounts of our tomfoolin'."

And so the winter passed and the rains, and the days of cloudless skies and chill starlit nights began. There were still freshets from the snow reservoirs piled high in the Sierran passes, and the Bar was flooded, but that passed too, and only the sunshine remained. Monotonous as the seasons were, there was a faint movement in the camp with the stirring of the sap in the pines and cedars. And then, one day, there was a strange excitement on the Bar. Men were seen running hither and thither, but mainly gathering in a crowd on Uncle Billy's claim, that still retained the old partner's names in "The Fall and Foster." To add to the excitement, there was the quickly repeated report of a revolver, to all appearance aimlessly exploded in the air by some one on the outskirts of the assemblage. As the crowd opened, Uncle Billy appeared, pale, hysterical, breathless, and staggering a little under the back-slapping and hand-shaking of the whole camp. For Uncle Billy had "struck it rich"—had just discovered a "pocket," roughly estimated to be worth fifteen thousand dollars!

Although in that supreme moment he missed the face of his old partner, he could not help seeing the unaffected delight and happiness shining in the eyes of all who sur-

rounded him. It was characteristic of that sanguine but uncertain life that success and good fortune brought no jealousy nor envy to the unfortunate, but was rather a promise and prophecy of the fulfillment of their own hopes. The gold was there—Nature but yielded up her secret. There was no prescribed limit to her bounty. So strong was this conviction that a long-suffering but still hopeful miner, in the enthusiasm of the moment, stooped down and patted a large boulder with the apostrophic "Good old gal!"

Then followed a night of jubilee, a next morning of hurried consultation with a mining expert and speculator lured to the camp by the good tidings; and then the very next night—to the utter astonishment of Cedar Camp—Uncle Billy, with a draft for twenty thousand dollars in his pocket, started for San Francisco, and took leave of his claim and the camp forever!

. . . . . .

When Uncle Billy landed at the wharves of San Francisco he was a little bewildered. The Golden Gate beyond was obliterated by the incoming sea-fog, which had also roofed in the whole city, and lights already glittered along the gray streets that climbed the grayer sand-hills. As a Western man, brought up by inland rivers, he was fascinated and thrilled by the tall-masted sea-going ships, and he felt a strange sense of the remoter mysterious ocean, which he had never seen. But he was impressed and startled by smartly dressed men and women, the passing of carriages, and a sudden conviction that he was strange and foreign to what he saw. It had been his cherished intention to call upon his old partner in his working clothes, and then clap down on the table before him a draft for ten thousand dollars as *his* share of their old claim. But in the face of these brilliant strangers a sudden and unexpected timidity came upon him. He had heard of a cheap popular hotel, much frequented by the returning gold-miner, who entered its hospitable doors—which held an easy access to shops—and emerged in a few hours a gorgeous butterfly of fashion, leaving his old chrysalis behind him. Thence he inquired his way; thence he afterwards issued in garments glaringly new and ill fitting. But he had not sacrificed his

beard, and there was still something fine and original in his handsome weak face that overcame the cheap convention of his clothes. Making his way to the post-office, he was again discomfited by the great size of the building, and bewildered by the array of little square letter-boxes behind glass which occupied one whole wall, and an equal number of opaque and locked wooden ones legibly numbered. His heart leaped; he remembered the number, and before him was a window with a clerk behind it. Uncle Billy leaned forward.

"Kin you tell me if the man that box 690 b'longs to is in?"

The clerk stared, made him repeat the question, and then turned away. But he returned almost instantly, with two or three grinning heads besides his own, apparently set behind his shoulders. Uncle Billy was again asked to repeat his question. He did so.

"Why don't you go and see if 690 is in the box?" said the first clerk, turning with affected asperity to one of the others.

The clerk went away, returned, and said with singular gravity, "He was there a moment ago, but he's gone out to stretch his legs. It's rather crampin' at first; and he can't stand it more than ten hours at a time, you know."

But simplicity has its limits. Uncle Billy had already guessed his real error in believing his partner was officially connected with the building; his cheek had flushed and then paled again. The pupils of his blue eyes had contracted into suggestive black points. "Ef you'll let me in at that winder, young fellers," he said, with equal gravity, "I'll show yer how I kin make *you* small enough to go in a box without crampin'! But I only wanted to know where Jim Foster *lived*."

At which the first clerk became perfunctory again, but civil. "A letter left in his box would get you that information," he said, "and here's paper and pencil to write it now."

Uncle Billy took the paper and began to write, "Just got here. Come and see me at"— He paused. A brilliant idea had struck him; he could impress both his old partner and the upstarts at the window; he would put in the name

of the latest "swell" hotel in San Francisco, said to be a fairy dream of opulence. He added "The Oriental," and without folding the paper shoved it in the window.

"Don't you want an envelope?" asked the clerk.

"Put a stamp on the corner of it," responded Uncle Billy, laying down a coin, "and she'll go through." The clerk smiled, but affixed the stamp, and Uncle Billy turned away.

But it was a short-lived triumph. The disappointment at finding Uncle Jim's address conveyed no idea of his habitation seemed to remove him farther away, and lose his identity in the great city. Besides, he must now make good his own address, and seek rooms at the Oriental. He went thither. The furniture and decorations, even in these early days of hotel-building in San Francisco, were extravagant and overstrained, and Uncle Billy felt lost and lonely in his strange surroundings. But he took a handsome suite of rooms, paid for them in advance on the spot, and then, half frightened, walked out of them to ramble vaguely through the city in the feverish hope of meeting his old partner. At night his inquietude increased; he could not face the long row of tables in the pillared dining-room, filled with smartly dressed men and women; he evaded his bedroom, with its brocaded satin chairs and its gilt bedstead, and fled to his modest lodgings at the Good Cheer House, and appeased his hunger at its cheap restaurant, in the company of retired miners and freshly arrived Eastern emigrants. Two or three days passed thus in this quaint double existence. Three or four times a day he would enter the gorgeous Oriental with affected ease and carelessness, demand his key from the hotel-clerk, ask for the letter that did not come, go to his room, gaze vaguely from his window on the passing crowd below for the partner he could not find, and then return to the Good Cheer House for rest and sustenance. On the fourth day he received a short note from Uncle Jim; it was couched in his usual sanguine but brief and business-like style. He was very sorry, but important and profitable business took him out of town, but he trusted to return soon and welcome his old partner. He was also, for the first time, jocose, and hoped that Uncle

Billy would not "see all the sights" before he, Uncle Jim, returned. Disappointing as this procrastination was to Uncle Billy, a gleam of hope irradiated it; the letter had bridged over that gulf which seemed to yawn between them at the post-office. His old partner had accepted his visit to San Francisco without question, and had alluded to a renewal of their old intimacy. For Uncle Billy, with all his trustful simplicity, had been tortured by two harrowing doubts: one, whether Uncle Jim in his new-fledged smartness as a "city" man—such as he saw in the streets—would care for his rough companionship; the other, whether he, Uncle Billy, ought not to tell him at once of his changed fortune. But, like all weak, unreasoning men, he clung desperately to a detail—he could not forego his old idea of astounding Uncle Jim by giving him his share of the "strike" as his first intimation of it, and he doubted, with more reason perhaps, if Jim would see him after he had heard of his good fortune. For Uncle Billy had still a frightened recollection of Uncle Jim's sudden stroke for independence, and that rigid punctiliousness which had made him doggedly accept the responsibility of his extravagant stake at euchre.

With a view of educating himself for Uncle Jim's company, he "saw the sights" of San Francisco—as an overgrown and somewhat stupid child might have seen them—with great curiosity, but little contamination or corruption. But I think he was chiefly pleased with watching the arrival of the Sacramento and Stockton steamers at the wharves, in the hope of discovering his old partner among the passengers on the gang-plank. Here, with his old superstitious tendency and gambler's instinct, he would augur great success in his search that day if any one of the passengers bore the least resemblance to Uncle Jim, if a man or woman stepped off first, or if he met a single person's questioning eye. Indeed, this got to be the real occupation of the day, which he would on no account have omitted, and to a certain extent revived each day in his mind the morning's work of their old partnership. He would say to himself, "It's time to go and look up Jim," and put off what he was pleased to think were his pleasures until this act of duty was accomplished.

In this singleness of purpose he made very few and no entangling acquaintances, nor did he impart to any one the secret of his fortune, loyally reserving it for his partner's first knowledge. To a man of his natural frankness and simplicity this was a great trial, and was, perhaps, a crucial test of his devotion. When he gave up his rooms at the Oriental —as not necessary after his partner's absence—he sent a letter, with his humble address, to the mysterious lock-box of his partner without fear or false shame. He would explain it all when they met. But he sometimes treated unlucky and returning miners to a dinner and a visit to the gallery of some theatre. Yet while he had an active sympathy with and understanding of the humblest, Uncle Billy, who for many years had done his own and his partner's washing, scrubbing, mending, and cooking, and saw no degradation in it, was somewhat inconsistently irritated by menial functions in men, and although he gave extravagantly to waiters, and threw a dollar to the crossing-sweeper, there was always a certain shy avoidance of them in his manner. Coming from the theatre one night Uncle Billy was, however, seriously concerned by one of these crossing-sweepers turning hastily before them and being knocked down by a passing carriage. The man rose and limped hurriedly away; but Uncle Billy was amazed and still more irritated to hear from his companion that this kind of menial occupation was often profitable, and that at some of the principal crossings the sweepers were already rich men.

But a few days later brought a more notable event to Uncle Billy. One afternoon in Montgomery Street he recognized in one of its smartly dressed frequenters a man who had a few years before been a member of Cedar Camp. Uncle Billy's childish delight at this meeting, which seemed to bridge over his old partner's absence, was, however, only half responded to by the ex-miner, and then somewhat satirically. In the fulness of his emotion, Uncle Billy confided to him that he was seeking his old partner, Jim Foster, and, reticent of his own good fortune, spoke glowingly of his partner's brilliant expectations, but deplored his inability to find him. And just now he was away on important business. "I reckon he's got back," said the man dryly. "I

didn't know he had a lock-box at the post-office, but I can give you his other address. He lives at the Presidio, at Washerwoman's Bay." He stopped and looked with a satirical smile at Uncle Billy. But the latter, familiar with Californian mining-camp nomenclature, saw nothing strange in it, and merely repeated his companion's words.

"You'll find him there! Good-by! So long! Sorry I'm in a hurry," said the ex-miner, and hurried away.

Uncle Billy was too delighted with the prospect of a speedy meeting with Uncle Jim to resent his former associate's supercilious haste, or even to wonder why Uncle Jim had not informed him that he had returned. It was not the first time that he had felt how wide was the gulf between himself and these others, and the thought drew him closer to his old partner, as well as his old idea, as it was now possible to surprise him with the draft. But as he was going to surprise him in his own boarding-house—probably a handsome one—Uncle Billy reflected that he would do so in a certain style.

He accordingly went to a livery stable and ordered a landau and pair, with a negro coachman. Seated in it, in his best and most ill-fitting clothes, he asked the coachman to take him to the Presidio, and leaned back in the cushions as they drove through the streets with such an expression of beaming gratification on his good-humored face that the passers-by smiled at the equipage and its extravagant occupant. To them it seemed the not unusual sight of the successful miner "on a spree." To the unsophisticated Uncle Billy their smiling seemed only a natural and kindly recognition of his happiness, and he nodded and smiled back to them with unsuspecting candor and innocent playfulness. "These yer 'Frisco fellers ain't *all* slouches, you bet," he added to himself half aloud, at the back of the grinning coachman.

Their way led through well-built streets to the outskirts, or rather to that portion of the city which seemed to have been overwhelmed by shifting sand-dunes, from which half-submerged fences and even low houses barely marked the line of highway. The resistless trade-winds which had marked this change blew keenly in his face and slightly

chilled his ardor. At a turn in the road the sea came in sight, and sloping towards it the great Cemetery of Lone Mountain, with white shafts and marbles that glittered in the sunlight like the sails of ships waiting to be launched down that slope into the Eternal Ocean. Uncle Billy shuddered. What if it had been his fate to seek Uncle Jim there!

"Dar's yar Presidio!" said the negro coachman a few moments later, pointing with his whip, "and dar's yar Wash'woman's Bay!"

Uncle Billy stared. A huge quadrangular fort of stone with a flag flying above its battlements stood at a little distance, pressed against the rocks, as if beating back the encroaching surges; between him and the fort but farther inland was a lagoon with a number of dilapidated, rudely patched cabins or cottages, like stranded driftwood around its shore. But there was no mansion, no block of houses, no street, not another habitation or dwelling to be seen!

Uncle Billy's first shock of astonishment was succeeded by a feeling of relief. He had secretly dreaded a meeting with his old partner in the "haunts of fashion"; whatever was the cause that made Uncle Jim seek this obscure retirement affected him but slightly; he even was thrilled with a vague memory of the old shiftless camp they had both abandoned. A certain instinct—he knew not why, or less still that it might be one of delicacy—made him alight before they reached the first house. Bidding the carriage wait, Uncle Billy entered, and was informed by a blowzy Irish laundress at a tub that Jim Foster, or "Arkansaw Jim," lived at the fourth shanty "beyant." He was at home, for "he'd shprained his fut." Uncle Billy hurried on, stopped before the door of a shanty scarcely less rude than their old cabin, and half timidly pushed it open. A growling voice from within, a figure that rose hurriedly, leaning on a stick, with an attempt to fly, but in the same moment sank back in a chair with an hysterical laugh—and Uncle Billy stood in the presence of his old partner! But as Uncle Billy darted forward, Uncle Jim rose again, and this time with outstretched hands. Uncle Billy caught them, and in one supreme pressure seemed to pour out and transfuse his whole simple soul into

his partner's. There they swayed each other backwards and forwards and sideways by their still clasped hands, until Uncle Billy, with a glance at Uncle Jim's bandaged ankle, shoved him by sheer force down into his chair.

Uncle Jim was first to speak. "Caught, b'gosh! I mighter known you'd be as big a fool as me! Look you, Billy Fall, do you know what you've done? You've druv me out er the streets whar I was makin' an honest livin', by day, on three crossin's! Yes," he laughed forgivingly, "you druv me out er it, by day, jest because I reckoned that some time I might run into your darned fool face,"—another laugh and a grasp of the hand,—"and then, b'gosh! not content with ruinin' my business *by day,* when I took to it at night, *you* took to goin' out at nights too, and so put a stopper on me there! Shall I tell you what else you did? Well, by the holy poker! I owe this sprained foot to your darned foolishness and my own, for it was getting away from *you* one night after the theatre that I got run into and run over!

"Ye see," he went on, unconscious of Uncle Billy's paling face, and with a *naïvete,* though perhaps not a delicacy, equal to Uncle Billy's own, "I had to play roots on you with that lock-box business and these letters, because I did not want you to know what I was up to, for you mightn't like it, and might think it was lowerin' to the old firm, don't yer see? I wouldn't hev gone into it, but I was played out, and I don't mind tellin' you *now,* old man, that when I wrote you that first chipper letter from the lock-box I hedn't eat anythin' for two days. But it's all right *now,*" with a laugh. "Then I got into this business—thinkin' it nothin'—jest the very last thing—and do you know, old pard, I couldn't tell anybody but *you*—and, in fact, I kept it jest to tell you —I've made nine hundred and fifty-six dollars! Yes, sir, *nine hundred and fifty-six dollars!* solid money, in Adams and Co.'s Bank, just out er my trade."

"Wot trade?" asked Uncle Billy.

Uncle Jim pointed to the corner, where stood a large, heavy crossing-sweeper's broom. "That trade."

"Certingly," said Uncle Billy, with a quick laugh.

"It's an outdoor trade," said Uncle Jim gravely, but with no suggestion of awkwardness or apology in his man-

ner; "and thar ain't much difference between sweepin' a crossin' with a broom and raking over tailing with a rake, *only—wot ye get* with a broom *you have handed to ye,* and ye don't have to *pick it up and fish it out er* the wet rocks and sluice-gushin'; and it's a heap less tiring to the back."

"Certingly, you bet!" said Uncle Billy enthusiastically, yet with a certain nervous abstraction.

"I'm glad ye say so; for yer see I didn't know at first how you'd tumble to my doing it, until I'd made my pile. And ef I hadn't made it, I wouldn't hev set eyes on ye agin, old pard—never!"

"Do you mind my runnin' out a minit?" said Uncle Billy, rising. "You see, I've got a friend waitin' for me outside—and I reckon"—he stammered—"I'll jest run out and send him off, so I kin talk comf'ble to ye."

"Ye ain't got anybody you're owin' money to," said Uncle Jim earnestly, "anybody follerin' you to get paid, eh? For I kin jest set down right here and write ye off a check on the bank!"

"No," said Uncle Billy. He slipped out of the door, and ran like a deer to the waiting carriage. Thrusting a twenty-dollar gold-piece into the coachman's hand, he said hoarsely, "I ain't wantin' that kerridge just now; ye ken drive around and hev a private jamboree all by yourself the rest of the afternoon, and then come and wait for me at the top o' the hill yonder."

Thus quit of his gorgeous equipage, he hurried back to Uncle Jim, grasping his ten thousand dollar draft in his pocket. He was nervous, he was frightened, but he must get rid of the draft and his story, and have it over. But before he could speak he was unexpectedly stopped by Uncle Jim.

"Now, look yer, Billy boy!" said Uncle Jim; "I got suthin' to say to ye—and I might as well clear it off my mind at once, and then we can start fair agin. Now," he went on, with a half laugh, "wasn't it enough for *me* to go on pretendin' I was rich and doing a big business, and gettin' up that lock-box dodge so as ye couldn't find out whar I hung out and what I was doin'—wasn't it enough for *me* to go on with all this play-actin', but *you,* you long-legged

or'nary cuss! must get up and go to lyin' and play-actin', too!"

"*Me* play-actin'? *Me* lyin'?" gasped Uncle Billy.

Uncle Jim leaned back in his chair and laughed. "Do you think you could fool *me?* Do you think I didn't see through your little game o' going to that swell Oriental, jest as if ye'd made a big strike—and all the while ye wasn't sleepin' or eatin' there, but jest wrastlin' yer hash and having a roll down at the Good Cheer! Do you think I didn't spy on ye and find that out? Oh, you long-eared jackass-rabbit!"

He laughed until the tears came into his eyes, and Uncle Billy laughed too, albeit until the laugh on his face became quite fixed, and he was fain to bury his head in his handkerchief.

"And yet," said Uncle Jim, with a deep breath, "gosh! I was frightened—jest for a minit! I thought, mebbe, you *had* made a big strike—when I got your first letter—and I made up my mind what I'd do! And then I remembered you was jest that kind of an open sluice that couldn't keep anythin' to yourself, and you'd have been sure to have yelled it out to *me* the first thing. So I waited. And I found you out, you old sinner!" He reached forward and dug Uncle Billy in the ribs.

"What *would* you hev done?" said Uncle Billy, after an hysterical collapse.

Uncle Jim's face grew grave again. "I'd hev—I'd—hev cl'ared out! Out er 'Frisco! out er Californy! out er Ameriky! I couldn't have stud it! Don't think I would hev begrudged ye yer luck! No man would have been gladder than me." He leaned forward again, and laid his hand caressingly upon his partner's arm—"Don't think I'd hev wanted to take a penny of it—but I—thar! I *couldn't* hev stood up under it! To hev had *you,* you, you that I left behind, comin' down here rollin' in wealth and new partners and friends, and arrive upon me—and this shanty—and"—he threw towards the corner of the room a terrible gesture, none the less terrible that it was illogical and inconsequent, to all that had gone before—"and—and—*that broom!*"

There was a dead silence in the room. With it Uncle

Billy seemed to feel himself again transported to the homely cabin at Cedar Camp and that fateful night, with his partner's strange, determined face before him as then. He even fancied that he heard the roaring of the pines without, and did not know that it was the distant sea.

But after a minute Uncle Jim resumed:—

"Of course you've made a little raise somehow, or you wouldn't be here?"

"Yes," said Uncle Billy eagerly. "Yes! I've got"— He stopped and stammered. "I've got—a—few hundreds."

"Oh, oh!" said Uncle Jim cheerfully. He paused, and then added earnestly, "I say! You ain't got left, over and above your d—d foolishness at the Oriental, as much as five hundred dollars?"

"I've got," said Uncle Billy, blushing a little over his first deliberate and affected lie, "I've got at least five hundred and seventy-two dollars. Yes," he added tentatively, gazing anxiously at his partner, "I've got at least that."

"Jee whillikins!" said Uncle Jim, with a laugh. Then eagerly, "Look here, pard! Then we're on velvet! I've got *nine* hundred; put your *five* with that, and I know a little ranch that we can get for twelve hundred. That's what I've been savin' up for—that's my little game! No more minin' for *me*. It's got a shanty twice as big as our old cabin, nigh on a hundred acres, and two mustangs. We can run it with two Chinamen and jest make it howl! Wot yer say—eh?" He extended his hand.

"I'm in," said Uncle Billy, radiantly grasping Uncle Jim's. But his smile faded, and his clear simple brow wrinkled in two lines.

Happily Uncle Jim did not notice it. "Now, then, old pard," he said brightly, "we'll have a gay old time to-night —one of our jamborees! I've got some whisky here and a deck o' cards, and we'll have a little game, you understand, but not for 'keeps' now! No, siree; we'll play for beans."

A sudden light illuminated Uncle Billy's face again, but he said, with a grim desperation, "Not to-night! I've got to go into town. That fren' o' mine expects me to go to

the theayter, don't ye see? But I'll be out to-morrow at sun-up, and we'll fix up this thing o' the ranch."

"Seems to me you're kinder stuck on this fren'," grunted Uncle Jim.

Uncle Billy's heart bounded at his partner's jealousy. "No—but I *must,* you know," he returned, with a faint laugh.

"I say—it ain't a *her,* is it?" said Uncle Jim.

Uncle Billy achieved a diabolical wink and a creditable blush at his lie.

"Billy!"

"Jim!"

And under cover of this festive gallantry Uncle Billy escaped. He ran through the gathering darkness, and toiled up the shifting sands to the top of the hill, where he found the carriage waiting.

"Wot," said Uncle Billy in a low confidential tone to the coachman, "wot do you 'Frisco fellers allow to be the best, biggest, and riskiest gamblin'-saloon here? Suthin' high-toned, you know?"

The negro grinned. It was the usual case of the extravagant spendthrift miner, though perhaps he had expected a different question and order.

"Dey is de 'Polka,' de 'El Dorado,' and de 'Arcade' saloon, boss," he said, flicking his whip meditatively. "Most gents from de mines prefer de 'Polka,' for dey is dancing wid de gals frown in. But de real *prima facie* place for gents who go for buckin' agin de tiger and straight-out gamblin' is de 'Arcade.'"

"Drive there like thunder!" said Uncle Billy, leaping into the carriage.

. . . . . .

True to his word, Uncle Billy was at his partner's shanty early the next morning. He looked a little tired, but happy, and had brought a draft with him for five hundred and seventy-five dollars, which he explained was the total of his capital. Uncle Jim was overjoyed. They would start for Napa that very day, and conclude the purchase of the ranch; Uncle Jim's sprained foot was a sufficient reason for his giving up his present vocation, which he could also sell

at a small profit. His domestic arrangements were very simple; there was nothing to take with him—there was everything to leave behind. And that afternoon, at sunset, the two reunited partners were seated on the deck of the Napa boat as she swung into the stream.

Uncle Billy was gazing over the railing with a look of abstracted relief towards the Golden Gate, where the sinking sun seemed to be drawing towards him in the ocean a golden stream that was forever pouring from the Bay and the three-hilled city beside it. What Uncle Billy was thinking of, or what the picture suggested to him, did not transpire; for Uncle Jim, who, emboldened by his holiday, was luxuriating in an evening paper, suddenly uttered a long-drawn whistle, and moved closer to his abstracted partner. "Look yer," he said, pointing to a paragraph he had evidently just read, "just you listen to this, and see if we ain't lucky, you and me, to be jest wot we air—trustin' to our own hard work—and not thinkin' o' 'strikes' and 'fortins.' Jest unbutton yer ears, Billy, while I reel off this yer thing I've jest struck in the paper, and see what d—d fools some men kin make o' themselves. And that theer reporter wot wrote it—must hev seed it reely!"

Uncle Jim cleared his throat, and holding the paper close to his eyes read aloud slowly:—

"'A scene of excitement that recalled the palmy days of '49 was witnessed last night at the Arcade Saloon. A stranger, who might have belonged to that reckless epoch, and who bore every evidence of being a successful Pike County miner out on a "spree," appeared at one of the tables with a negro coachman bearing two heavy bags of gold. Selecting a faro-bank as his base of operations, he began to bet heavily and with apparent recklessness, until his play excited the breathless attention of every one. In a few moments he had won a sum variously estimated at from eighty to a hundred thousand dollars. A rumor went round the room that it was a concerted attempt to "break the bank" rather than the drunken freak of a Western miner, dazzled by some successful strike. To this theory the man's careless and indifferent bearing towards his extraordinary gains lent great credence. The attempt, if such it was, however, was unsuc-

cessful. After winning ten times in succession the luck turned, and the unfortunate "bucker" was cleared out not only of his gains, but of his original investment, which may be placed roughly at twenty thousand dollars. This extraordinary play was witnessed by a crowd of excited players, who were less impressed by even the magnitude of the stakes than the perfect *sang froid* and recklessness of the player, who, it is said, at the close of the game tossed a twenty-dollar gold-piece to the banker and smilingly withdrew. The man was not recognized by any of the habitués of the place.'

"There!" said Uncle Jim, as he hurriedly slurred over the French substantive at the close, "did ye ever see such God-forsaken foolishness?"

Uncle Billy lifted his abstracted eyes from the current, still pouring its unreturning gold into the sinking sun, and said, with a deprecatory smile, "Never!"

Nor even in the days of prosperity that visited the Great Wheat Ranch of "Fall and Foster" did he ever tell his secret to his partner.

THE NOTARY OF PERIGUEUX

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW

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By H. W. LONGFELLOW

Do not trust thy body with a physician. He'll make thy foolish bones go without flesh in a fortnight, and thy soul walk without a body in a se'nnight after. —*Shirley.*

YOU must know, gentlemen, that there lived some years ago, in the city of Périgueux, an honest notary public, the descendant of a very ancient and broken-down family, and the occupant of one of those old weather-beaten tenements which remind you of the times of your great-grandfather. He was a man of an unoffending, quiet disposition; the father of a family, though not the head of it—for in that family "the hen overcrowed the cock," and the neighbors, when they spake of the notary, shrugged their shoulders, and exclaimed, "Poor fellow! his spurs want sharpening." In fine—you understand me, gentlemen—he was hen-pecked.

Well, finding no peace at home, he sought it elsewhere, as was very natural for him to do; and at length discovered a place of rest far beyond the cares and clamors of domestic life. This was a little *café estaminet* a short way out of the city, whither he repaired every evening to smoke his pipe, drink sugar-water, and play his favorite game of domino. There he met the boon companions he most loved; heard all the floating chit-chat of the day; laughed when he was in a merry mood; found consolation when he was sad; and at all times gave vent to his opinions without fear of being snubbed short by a flat contradiction.

Now, the notary's bosom friend was a dealer in claret and cognac, who lived about a league from the city, and always passed his evenings at the *estaminet*. He was a gross, corpulent fellow, raised from a full-blooded Gascon breed, and sired by a comic actor of some reputation in his way. He was remarkable for nothing but his good-humor, his love of cards, and a strong propensity to test the quality of his

own liquors by comparing them with those sold at other places.

As evil communications corrupt good manners, the bad practices of the wine-dealer won insensibly upon the worthy notary; and before he was aware of it, he found himself weaned from domino and sugar-water, and addicted to piquet and spiced wine. Indeed, it not infrequently happened that, after a long session at the *estaminet,* the two friends grew so urbane that they would waste a full half-hour at the door in friendly dispute which should conduct the other home.

Though this course of life agreed well enough with the sluggish, phlegmatic temperament of the wine-dealer, it soon began to play the very deuce with the more sensitive organization of the notary, and finally put his nervous system completely out of tune. He lost his appetite, became gaunt and haggard, and could get no sleep. Legions of blue-devils haunted him by day, and by night strange faces peeped through his bed-curtains and the nightmare snorted in his ear. The worse he grew the more he smoked and tippled; and the more he smoked and tippled, why, as a matter of course, the worse he grew. His wife alternately stormed, remonstrated, entreated; but all in vain. She made the house too hot for him—he retreated to the tavern; she broke his long-stemmed pipes upon the andirons—he substituted a short-stemmed one, which, for safe-keeping, he carried in his waistcoat pocket.

Thus the unhappy notary ran gradually down at the heel. What with his bad habits and his domestic grievances, he became completely hipped. He imagined that he was going to die, and suffered in quick succession all the diseases that ever beset mortal man. Every shooting pain was an alarming symptom—every uneasy feeling after dinner a sure prognostic of some mortal disease. In vain did his friends endeavor to reason, and then to laugh him out of his strange whims; for when did ever jest or reason cure a sick imagination? His only answer was, "Do let me alone; I know better than you what ails me."

Well, gentlemen, things were in this state when, one afternoon in December, as he sat moping in his office, wrapped in an overcoat, with a cap on his head and his feet thrust into a pair of furred slippers, a cabriolet stopped at the door, and a

loud knocking without aroused him from his gloomy revery. It was a message from his friend the wine-dealer, who had been suddenly attacked with a violent fever, and, growing worse and worse, had now sent in the greatest haste for the notary to draw up his last will and testament. The case was urgent, and admitted neither excuse nor delay; and the notary, tying a handkerchief round his face, and buttoning up to the chin, jumped into the cabriolet, and suffered himself, though not without some dismal presentiments and misgivings of heart, to be driven to the wine-dealer's house.

When he arrived he found everything in the greatest confusion. On entering the house he ran against the apothecary, who was coming down stairs, with a face as long as your arm; and a few steps farther he met the housekeeper—for the wine-dealer was an old bachelor—running up and down, and wringing her hands, for fear that the good man should die without making his will. He soon reached the chamber of his sick friend, and found him tossing about in a paroxysm of fever, and calling aloud for a draught of cold water. The notary shook his head; he thought this a fatal symptom; for ten years back the wine-dealer had been suffering under a species of hydrophobia, which seemed suddenly to have left him.

When the sick man saw who stood by his bedside he stretched out his hand and exclaimed:

"Ah! my dear friend! have you come at last? You see it is all over with me. You have arrived just in time to draw up that—that passport of mine. Ah, *grand diable!* how hot it is here! Water—water—water! Will nobody give me a drop of cold water?"

As the case was an urgent one, the notary made no delay in getting his papers in readiness; and in a short time the last will and testament of the wine-dealer was drawn up in due form, the notary guiding the sick man's hand as he scrawled his signature at the bottom.

As the evening wore away, the wine-dealer grew worse and worse, and at length became delirious, mingling in his incoherent raving the phrases of the Credo and Paternoster with the shibboleth of the dram-shop and the card-table.

"Take care! take care! There, now—*Credo in*—Pop!

ting-a-ling-ling! give me some of that. Cent-é-dize! Why, you old publican, this wine is poisoned—I know your tricks! —*Sanctam ecclesiam Catholicam*—Well, well, we shall see. Imbecile! to have a tierce-major and a seven of hearts, and discard the seven! By St. Anthony, capot! You are lurched —ha! ha! I told you so. I knew very well—there—there—don't interrupt me—*Carnis resurrectionem et vitam eternam!*"

With these words upon his lips the poor wine-dealer expired. Meanwhile the notary sat cowering over the fire, aghast at the fearful scene that was passing before him, and now and then striving to keep up his courage by a glass of cognac. Already his fears were on the alert, and the idea of contagion flitted to and fro through his mind. In order to quiet these thoughts of evil import, he lighted his pipe, and began to prepare for returning home. At that moment the apothecary turned round to him and said:

"Dreadful sickly time, this! The disorder seems to be spreading."

"What disorder?" exclaimed the notary, with a movement of surprise.

"Two died yesterday, and three to-day," continued the apothecary, without answering the question. "Very sickly time, sir—very."

"But what disorder is it? What disease has carried off my friend here so suddenly?"

"What disease? Why, scarlet fever, to be sure."

"And is it contagious?"

"Certainly."

"Then I am a dead man!" exclaimed the notary, putting his pipe into his waistcoat-pocket, and beginning to walk up and down the room in despair. "I am a dead man! Now don't deceive me—don't, will you? What—what are the symptoms?"

"A sharp burning pain in the right side," said the apothecary.

"Oh, what a fool I was to come here!"

In vain did the housekeeper and the apothecary strive to pacify him—he was not a man to be reasoned with; he answered that he knew his own constitution better than they

did, and insisted upon going home without delay. Unfortunately, the vehicle he came in had returned to the city, and the whole neighborhood was abed and asleep. What was to be done? Nothing in the world but to take the apothecary's horse, which stood hitched at the door, patiently waiting his master's will.

Well, gentlemen, as there was no remedy, our notary mounted this raw-boned steed, and set forth upon his homeward journey. The night was cold and gusty, and the wind right in his teeth. Overhead the leaden clouds were beating to and fro, and through them the newly-risen moon seemed to be tossing and drifting along like a cock-boat in the surf; now swallowed up in a huge billow of cloud, and now lifted upon its bosom and dashed with silvery spray. The trees by the roadside groaned with a sound of evil omen, and before him lay three mortal miles, beset with a thousand imaginary perils. Obedient to the whip and spur, the steed leaped forward by fits and starts, now dashing away in a tremendous gallop, and now relaxing into a long, hard trot; while the rider, filled with symptoms of disease and dire presentiments of death, urged him on, as if he were fleeing before the pestilence.

In this way, by dint of whistling and shouting, and beating right and left, one mile of the fatal three was safely passed. The apprehensions of the notary had so far subsided that he even suffered the poor horse to walk up hill; but these apprehensions were suddenly revived again with tenfold violence by a sharp pain in the right side, which seemed to pierce him like a needle.

"It is upon me at last!" groaned the fear-stricken man. "Heaven be merciful to me, the greatest of sinners! And must I die in a ditch, after all? He! get up! get up!"

And away went horse and rider at full speed—hurry-scurry—up hill and down—panting and blowing like a whirlwind. At every leap the pain in the rider's side seemed to increase. At first it was a little point like the prick of a needle—then it spread to the size of a half-franc piece—then covered a place as large as the palm of your hand. It gained upon him fast. The poor man groaned aloud in agony; faster and faster sped the horse over the frozen ground—farther and

farther spread the pain over his side. To complete the dismal picture, the storm commenced—snow mingled with rain. But snow and rain and cold were naught to him; for, though his arms and legs were frozen to icicles, he felt it not; the fatal symptom was upon him; he was doomed to die—not of cold, but of scarlet fever!

At length, he knew not how, more dead than alive, he reached the gate of the city. A band of ill-bred dogs, that were serenading at a corner of the street, seeing the notary dash by, joined in the hue and cry, and ran barking and yelping at his heels. It was now late at night, and only here and there a solitary lamp twinkled from an upper story. But on went the notary, down this street and up that, till at last he reached his own door. There was a light in his wife's bedchamber. The good woman came to the window, alarmed at such a knocking, and howling, and clattering at her door so late at night; and the notary was too deeply absorbed in his own sorrows to observe that the lamp cast the shadow of two heads on the window-curtain.

"Let me in! let me in! Quick! quick!" he exclaimed, almost breathless from terror and fatigue.

"Who are you, that come to disturb a lone woman at this hour of the night?" cried a sharp voice from above. "Begone about your business, and let quiet people sleep."

"Oh, *diable, diable!* Come down and let me in! I am your husband. Don't you know my voice? Quick, I beseech you; for I am dying here in the street!"

After a few moments of delay and a few more words of parley, the door was opened, and the notary stalked into his domicile, pale and haggard in aspect, and as stiff and straight as a ghost. Cased from head to heel in an armor of ice, as the glare of the lamp fell upon him he looked like a knight-errant mailed in steel. But in one place his armor was broken. On his right side was a circular spot as large as the crown of your hat, and about as black!

"My dear wife!" he exclaimed, with more tenderness than he had exhibited for many years, "reach me a chair. My hours are numbered. I am a dead man!"

Alarmed at these exclamations, his wife stripped off his overcoat. Something fell from beneath it, and was dashed to

pieces on the hearth. It was the notary's pipe. He placed his hand upon his side, and lo! it was bare to the skin. Coat, waistcoat, and linen were burnt through and through, and there was a blister on his side as large over as your head!

The mystery was soon explained, symptom and all. The notary had put his pipe into his pocket without knocking out the ashes! And so my story ends.

"Is that all?" asked the radical, when the story-teller had finished.

"That is all."

"Well, what does your story prove?"

"That is more than I can tell. All I know is that the story is true."

"And did he die?" said the nice little man in gosling-green.

"Yes; he died afterward," replied the story-teller, rather annoyed at the question.

"And what did he die of?" continued gosling-green, following him up.

"What did he die of? why, he died—of a sudden!"

THE WIDOW'S CRUISE

BY F. R. STOCKTON

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THE WIDOW DUCKET lived in a small village about ten miles from the New Jersey seacoast. In this village she was born, here she had married and buried her husband, and here she expected somebody to bury her; but she was in no hurry for this, for she had scarcely reached middle age. She was a tall woman with no apparent fat in her composition, and full of activity both muscular and mental.

She rose at six o'clock in the morning, cooked breakfast, set the table, washed the dishes when the meal was over, milked, churned, swept, washed, ironed, worked in her little garden, attended to the flowers in the front yard and in the afternoon knitted and quilted and sewed, and after tea she either went to see her neighbors or had them come to see her. When it was really dark she lighted the lamp in her parlor and read for an hour, and if it happened to be one of Miss Mary Wilkins's books that she read she expressed doubts as to the realism of the characters therein described.

These doubts she expressed to Dorcas Networthy, who was a small, plump woman, with a solemn face, who had lived with the widow for many years and who had become her devoted disciple. Whatever the widow did, that also did Dorcas—not so well, for her heart told her she could never expect to do that, but with a yearning anxiety to do everything as well as she could.

She rose at five minutes past six, and in a subsidiary way she helped to get the breakfast, to eat it, to wash up the dishes, to work in the garden, to quilt, to sew, to visit and receive, and no one could have tried harder than she did to keep awake when the widow read aloud in the evening.

All these things happened every day in the summer-time, but in the winter the widow and Dorcas cleared the snow

"From a Story-Teller's Pack." Copyright 1897 by Charles Scribner's Sons.

from their little front path instead of attending to the flowers, and in the evening they lighted a fire as well as a lamp in the parlor.

Sometimes, however, something different happened, but this was not often, only a few times in the year. One of the different things occurred when Mrs. Ducket and Dorcas were sitting on their little front porch one summer afternoon, one on the little bench on one side of the door, and the other on the little bench on the other side of the door, each waiting until she should hear the clock strike five, to prepare tea. But it was not yet a quarter to five when a one-horse wagon containing four men came slowly down the street. Dorcas first saw the wagon, and she instantly stopped knitting.

"Mercy on me!" she exclaimed. "Whoever those people are, they are strangers here, and they don't know where to stop, for they first go to one side of the street and then to the other."

The widow looked around sharply. "Humph!" said she. "Those men are sailormen. You might see that in a twinklin' of an eye. Sailormen always drive that way, because that is the way they sail ships. They first tack in one direction and then in another."

"Mr. Ducket didn't like the sea?" remarked Dorcas, for about the three hundredth time.

"No, he didn't," answered the widow, for about the two hundred and fiftieth time, for there had been occasions when she thought Dorcas put this question inopportunely. "He hated it, and he was drowned in it through trustin' a sailorman, which I never did nor shall. Do you really believe those men are comin' here?"

"Upon my word I do!" said Dorcas, and her opinion was correct.

The wagon drew up in front of Mrs. Ducket's little white house, and the two women sat rigidly, their hands in their laps, staring at the man who drove.

This was an elderly personage with whitish hair, and under his chin a thin whitish beard, which waved in the gentle breeze and gave Dorcas the idea that his head was filled with hair which was leaking out from below.

"Is this the Widow Ducket's?" inquired this elderly man, in a strong, penetrating voice.

"That's my name," said the widow, and laying her knitting on the bench beside her, she went to the gate. Dorcas also laid her knitting on the bench beside her and went to the gate.

"I was told," said the elderly man, "at a house we touched at about a quarter of a mile back, that the Widow Ducket's was the only house in this village where there was any chance of me and my mates getting a meal. We are four sailors, and we are making from the bay over to Cuppertown, and that's eight miles ahead yet, and we are all pretty sharp set for something to eat."

"This is the place," said the widow, "and I do give meals if there is enough in the house and everything comes handy."

"Does everything come handy to-day?" said he.

"It does," said she, "and you can hitch your horse and come in; but I haven't got anything for him."

"Oh, that's all right," said the man, "we brought along stores for him, so we'll just make fast and then come in."

The two women hurried into the house in a state of bustling preparation, for the furnishing of this meal meant one dollar in cash.

The four mariners, all elderly men, descended from the wagon, each one scrambling with alacrity over a different wheel.

A box of broken ship-biscuit was brought out and put on the ground in front of the horse, who immediately set himself to eating with great satisfaction.

Tea was a little late that day, because there were six persons to provide for instead of two, but it was a good meal, and after the four seamen had washed their hands and faces at the pump in the back yard and had wiped them on two towels furnished by Dorcas, they all came in and sat down. Mrs. Ducket seated herself at the head of the table with the dignity proper to the mistress of the house, and Dorcas seated herself at the other end with the dignity proper to the disciple of the mistress. No service was necessary, for everything that was to be eaten or drunk was on the table.

When each of the elderly mariners had had as much bread and butter, quickly baked soda-biscuit, dried beef, cold ham, cold tongue, and preserved fruit of every variety known, as

his storage capacity would permit, the mariner in command, Captain Bird, pushed back his chair, whereupon the other mariners pushed back their chairs.

"Madam," said Captain Bird, "we have all made a good meal, which didn't need to be no better nor more of it, and we're satisfied; but that horse out there has not had time to rest himself enough to go the eight miles that lies ahead of us, so, if it's all the same to you and this good lady, we'd like to sit on that front porch awhile and smoke our pipes. I was a-looking at that porch when I came in, and I bethought to myself what a rare good place it was to smoke a pipe in."

"There's pipes been smoked there," said the widow, rising, "and it can be done again. Inside the house I don't allow tobacco, but on the porch neither of us minds."

So the four captains betook themselves to the porch, two of them seating themselves on the little bench on one side of the door, and two of them on the little bench on the other side of the door, and lighted their pipes.

"Shall we clear off the table and wash up the dishes," said Dorcas, "or wait until they are gone?"

"We will wait until they are gone," said the widow, "for now that they are here we might as well have a bit of a chat with them. When a sailorman lights his pipe he is generally willin' to talk, but when he is eatin' you can't get a word out of him."

Without thinking it necessary to ask permission, for the house belonged to her, the Widow Ducket brought a chair and put it in the hall close to the open front door, and Dorcas brought another chair and seated herself by the side of the widow.

"Do all you sailormen belong down there at the bay?" asked Mrs. Ducket; thus the conversation began, and in a few minutes it had reached a point at which Captain Bird thought it proper to say that a great many strange things happen to seamen sailing on the sea which lands-people never dream of.

"Such as anything in particular?" asked the widow, at which remark Dorcas clasped her hands in expectancy.

At this question each of the mariners took his pipe from his mouth and gazed upon the floor in thought.

"There's a good many strange things happened to me and

my mates at sea. Would you and that other lady like to hear any of them?" asked Captain Bird.

"We would like to hear them if they are true," said the widow.

"There's nothing happened to me and my mates that isn't true," said Captain Bird, "and here is something that once happened to me: I was on a whaling v'yage when a big sperm-whale, just as mad as a fiery bull, came at us, head on, and struck the ship at the stern with such tremendous force that his head crashed right through her timbers and he went nearly half his length into her hull. The hold was mostly filled with empty barrels, for we was just beginning our v'yage, and when he had made kindling-wood of these there was room enough for him. We all expected that it wouldn't take five minutes for the vessel to fill and go to the bottom, and we made ready to take to the boats; but it turned out we didn't need to take to no boats, for as fast as the water rushed into the hold of the ship, that whale drank it and squirted it up through the two blow-holes in the top of his head, and as there was an open hatchway just over his head, the water all went into the sea again, and that whale kept working day and night pumping the water out until we beached the vessel on the island of Trinidad—the whale helping us wonderful on our way over by the powerful working of his tail, which, being outside in the water, acted like a propeller. I don't believe anything stranger than that ever happened to a whaling-ship."

"No," said the widow, "I don't believe anything ever did."

Captain Bird now looked at Captain Sanderson, and the latter took his pipe out of his mouth and said that in all his sailing around the world he had never known anything queerer than what happened to a big steamship he chanced to be on, which ran into an island in a fog. Everybody on board thought the ship was wrecked, but it had twin screws, and was going at such a tremendous speed that it turned the island entirely upside down and sailed over it, and he had heard tell that even now people sailing over the spot could look down into the water and see the roots of the trees and the cellars of the houses.

Captain Sanderson now put his pipe back into his mouth, and Captain Burress took out his pipe.

"I was once in an obelisk-ship," said he, "that used to trade regular between Egypt and New York, carrying obelisks. We had a big obelisk on board. The way they ship obelisks is to make a hole in the stern of the ship, and run the obelisk in, p'inted end foremost; and this obelisk filled up nearly the whole of that ship from stern to bow. We was about ten days out, and sailing afore a northeast gale with the engines at full speed, when suddenly we spied breakers ahead, and our captain saw we was about to run on a bank. Now if we hadn't had an obelisk on board we might have sailed over that bank, but the captain knew that with an obelisk on board we drew too much water for this, and that we'd be wrecked in about fifty-five seconds if something wasn't done quick. So he had to do something quick, and this is what he did: He ordered all steam on, and drove slambang on that bank. Just as he expected, we stopped so suddint that that big obelisk bounced for'ard, its p'inted end foremost, and went clean through the bow and shot out into the sea. The minute it did that the vessel was so lightened that it rose in the water and we then steamed over the bank. There was one man knocked overboard by the shock when we struck, but as soon as we missed him we went back after him and we got him all right. You see, when that obelisk went overboard, its butt-end, which was heaviest, went down first, and when it touched the bottom it just stood there, and as it was such a big obelisk there was about five and a half feet of it stuck out of the water. The man who was knocked overboard he just swum for that obelisk and he climbed up the hiryglyphics. It was a mighty fine obelisk, and the Egyptians had cut their hiryglyphics good and deep, so that the man could get hand and foot hold; and when we got to him and took him off, he was sitting high and dry on the p'inted end of that obelisk. It was a great pity about the obelisk, for it was a good obelisk, but as I never heard the company tried to raise it, I expect it is standing there yet."

Captain Burress now put his pipe back into his mouth and looked at Captain Jenkinson, who removed his pipe and said:

"The queerest thing that ever happened to me was about a shark. We was off the Banks, and the time of year was July, and the ice was coming down, and we got in among a

lot of it. Not far away, off our weather bow, there was a little iceberg which had such a queerness about it that the captain and three men went in a boat to look at it. The ice was mighty clear ice, and you could see almost through it, and right inside of it, not more than three feet above the water-line, and about two feet, or maybe twenty inches, inside the ice, was a whopping big shark, about fourteen feet long,—a regular man-eater,—frozen in there hard and fast. 'Bless my soul,' said the captain, 'this is a wonderful curiosity, and I'm going to git him out.' Just then one of the men said he saw that shark wink, but the captain wouldn't believe him, for he said that shark was frozen stiff and hard and couldn't wink. You see, the captain had his own idees about things, and he knew that whales was warm-blooded and would freeze if they was shut up in ice, but he forgot that sharks was not whales and that they're cold-blooded just like toads. And there is toads that has been shut up in rocks for thousands of years, and they stayed alive, no matter how cold the place was, because they was cold-blooded, and when the rocks was split, out hopped the frog. But, as I said before, the captain forgot sharks was cold-blooded, and he determined to git that one out.

"Now you both know, being housekeepers, that if you take a needle and drive it into a hunk of ice you can split it. The captain had a sail-needle with him, and so he drove it into the iceberg right alongside of the shark and split it. Now the minute he did it he knew that the man was right when he said he saw the shark wink, for it flopped out of that iceberg quicker nor a flash of lightning."

"What a happy fish he must have been!" ejaculated Dorcas, forgetful of precedent, so great was her emotion.

"Yes," said Captain Jenkinson, "it was a happy fish enough, but it wasn't a happy captain. You see, that shark hadn't had anything to eat, perhaps for a thousand years, until the captain came along with his sail-needle."

"Surely you sailormen do see strange things," now said the widow, "and the strangest thing about them is that they are true."

"Yes, indeed," said Dorcas, "that is the most wonderful thing."

"You wouldn't suppose," said the Widow Ducket, glancing from one bench of mariners to the other, "that I have a sea-story to tell, but I have, and if you like I will tell it to you."

Captain Bird looked up a little surprised.

"We would like to hear it—indeed, we would, madam," said he.

"Ay, ay!" said Captain Burress, and the two other mariners nodded.

"It was a good while ago," she said, "when I was living on the shore near the head of the bay, that my husband was away and I was left alone in the house. One mornin' my sister-in-law, who lived on the other side of the bay, sent me word by a boy on a horse that she hadn't any oil in the house to fill the lamp that she always put in the window to light her husband home, who was a fisherman, and if I would send her some by the boy she would pay me back as soon as they bought oil. The boy said he would stop on his way home and take the oil to her, but he never did stop, or perhaps he never went back, and about five o'clock I began to get dreadfully worried, for I knew if that lamp wasn't in my sister-in-law's window by dark she might be a widow before midnight. So I said to myself, 'I've got to get that oil to her, no matter what happens or how it's done.' Of course I couldn't tell what might happen, but there was only one way it could be done, and that was for me to get into the boat that was tied to the post down by the water, and take it to her, for it was too far for me to walk around by the head of the bay. Now, the trouble was, I didn't know no more about a boat and the managin' of it than any one of you sailormen knows about clear-starchin'. But there wasn't no use of thinkin' what I knew and what I didn't know, for I had to take it to her, and there was no way of doin' it except in that boat. So I filled a gallon can, for I thought I might as well take enough while I was about it, and I went down to the water and I unhitched that boat and I put the oil-can into her, and then I got in, and off I started, and when I was about a quarter of a mile from the shore—"

"Madam," interrupted Captain Bird, "did you row or—or was there a sail to the boat?"

The widow looked at the questioner for a moment. "No," said she, "I didn't row. I forgot to bring the oars from the house; but it didn't matter, for I didn't know how to use them, and if there had been a sail I couldn't have put it up, for I didn't know how to use it, either. I used the rudder to make the boat go. The rudder was the only thing I knew anything about. I'd held a rudder when I was a little girl, and I knew how to work it. So I just took hold of the handle of the rudder and turned it round and round, and that made the boat go ahead, you know, and—"

"Madam!" exclaimed Captain Bird, and the other elderly mariners took their pipes from their mouths.

"Yes, that is the way I did it," continued the widow, briskly. "Big steamships are made to go by a propeller turning round and round at their back ends, and I made the rudder work in the same way, and I got along very well, too, until suddenly, when I was about a quarter of a mile from the shore, a most terrible and awful storm arose. There must have been a typhoon or a cyclone out at sea, for the waves came up the bay bigger than houses, and when they got to the head of the bay they turned around and tried to get out to sea again. So in this way they continually met, and made the most awful and roarin' pilin' up of waves that ever was known.

"My little boat was pitched about as if it had been a feather in a breeze, and when the front part of it was cleavin' itself down into the water the hind part was stickin' up until the rudder whizzed around like a patent churn with no milk in it. The thunder began to roar and the lightnin' flashed, and three sea-gulls, so nearly frightened to death that they began to turn up the whites of their eyes, flew down and sat on one of the seats of the boat, forgettin' in that awful moment that man was their nat'ral enemy. I had a couple of biscuits in my pocket, because I had thought I might want a bite in crossin', and I crumpled up one of these and fed the poor creatures. Then I began to wonder what I was goin' to do, for things were gettin' awfuller and awfuller every instant, and the little boat was a-heavin' and a-pitchin' and a-rollin' and h'istin' itself up, first on one end and then on the other, to such an extent that if I hadn't kept tight

hold of the rudder-handle I'd slipped off the seat I was sittin' on.

"All of a sudden I remembered that oil in the can; but just as I was puttin' my fingers on the cork my conscience smote me. 'Am I goin' to use this oil,' I said to myself, 'and let my sister-in-law's husband be wrecked for want of it?' And then I thought that he wouldn't want it all that night, and perhaps they would buy oil the next day, and so I poured out about a tumblerful of it on the water, and I can just tell you sailormen that you never saw anything act as prompt as that did. In three seconds, or perhaps five, the water all around me, for the distance of a small front yard, was just as flat as a table and as smooth as glass, and so invitin' in appearance that the three gulls jumped out of the boat and began to swim about on it, primin' their feathers and lookin' at themselves in the transparent depths, though I must say that one of them made an awful face as he dipped his bill into the water and tasted kerosene.

"Now I had time to sit quiet in the midst of the placid space I had made for myself, and rest from workin' of the rudder. Truly it was a wonderful and marvelous thing to look at. The waves was roarin' and leapin' up all around me higher than the roof of this house, and sometimes their tops would reach over so that they nearly met and shut out all view of the stormy sky, which seemed as if it was bein' torn to pieces by blazin' lightnin', while the thunder pealed so tremendous that it almost drowned the roar of the waves. Not only above and all around me was everything terrific and fearful, but even under me it was the same, for there was a big crack in the bottom of the boat as wide as my hand, and through this I could see down into the water beneath, and there was—"

"Madam!" ejaculated Captain Bird, the hand which had been holding his pipe a few inches from his mouth now dropping to his knee; and at this motion the hands which held the pipes of the three other mariners dropped to their knees.

"Of course it sounds strange," continued the widow, "but I know that people can see down into clear water, and the water under me was clear, and the crack was wide

enough for me to see through, and down under me was sharks and swordfishes and other horrible water creatures, which I had never seen before, all driven into the bay, I haven't a doubt, by the violence of the storm out at sea. The thought of my bein' upset and fallin' in among those monsters made my very blood run cold, and involuntary-like I began to turn the handle of the rudder, and in a moment I shot into a wall of ragin' sea-water that was towerin' around me. For a second I was fairly blinded and stunned, but I had the cork out of that oil-can in no time, and very soon—you'd scarcely believe it if I told you how soon—I had another placid mill-pond surroundin' of me. I sat there a-pantin' and fannin' with my straw hat, for you'd better believe I was flustered, and then I began to think how long it would take me to make a line of mill-ponds clean across the head of the bay, and how much oil it would need, and whether I had enough. So I sat and calculated that if a tumblerful of oil would make a smooth place about seven yards across, which I should say was the width of the one I was in,—which I calculated by a measure of my eye as to how many breadths of carpet it would take to cover it,—and if the bay was two miles across betwixt our house and my sister-in-law's, and, although I couldn't get the thing down to exact figures, I saw pretty soon that I wouldn't have oil enough to make a level cuttin' through all those mountainous billows, and besides, even if I had enough to take me across, what would be the good of goin' if there wasn't any oil left to fill my sister-in-law's lamp?

"While I was thinkin' and calculatin' a perfectly dreadful thing happened, which made me think if I didn't get out of this pretty soon I'd find myself in a mighty risky predicament. The oil-can, which I had forgotten to put the cork in, toppled over, and before I could grab it every drop of the oil ran into the hind part of the boat, where it was soaked up by a lot of dry dust that was there. No wonder my heart sank when I saw this. Glancin' wildly around me, as people will do when they are scared, I saw the smooth place I was in gettin' smaller and smaller, for the kerosene was evaporatin', as it will do even off woolen clothes if you give it time enough. The first pond I had come out of seemed to be

covered up, and the great, towerin', throbbin' precipice of sea-water was a-closin' around me.

"Castin' down my eyes in despair, I happened to look through the crack in the bottom of the boat, and oh, what a blessed relief it was! far down there everything was smooth and still, and I could see the sand on the bottom, as level and hard, no doubt, as it was on the beach. Suddenly the thought struck me that that bottom would give me the only chance I had of gettin' out of the frightful fix I was in. If I could fill that oil-can with air, and then puttin' it under my arm and takin' a long breath if I could drop down on that smooth bottom, I might run along toward shore, as far as I could, and then, when I felt my breath was givin' out, I could take a pull at the oil-can and take another run, and then take another pull and another run, and perhaps the can would hold air enough for me until I got near enough to shore to wade to dry land. To be sure, the sharks and other monsters were down there, but then they must have been awfully frightened, and perhaps they might not remember that man was their nat'ral enemy. Anyway, I thought it would be better to try the smooth water passage down there than stay and be swallowed up by the ragin' waves on top.

"So I blew the can full of air and corked it, and then I tore up some of the boards from the bottom of the boat so as to make a hole big enough for me to get through,—and you sailormen needn't wriggle so when I say that, for you all know a divin'-bell hasn't any bottom at all and the water never comes in,—and so when I got the hole big enough I took the oil-can under my arm, and was just about to slip down through it when I saw an awful turtle a-walkin' through the sand at the bottom. Now, I might trust sharks and swordfishes and sea-serpeants to be frightened and forget about their nat'ral enemies, but I never could trust a gray turtle as big as a cart, with a black neck a yard long, with yellow bags to its jaws, to forget anything or to remember anything. I'd as lieve get into a bathtub with a live crab as to go down there. It wasn't of no use even so much as thinkin' of it, so I gave up that plan and didn't once look through that hole again."

"And what did you do, madam?" asked Captain Bird, who was regarding her with a face of stone.

"I used electricity," she said. "Now don't start as if you had a shock of it. That's what I used. When I was younger than I was then, and sometimes visited friends in the city, we often amused ourselves by rubbing our feet on the carpet until we got ourselves so full of electricity that we could put up our fingers and light the gas. So I said to myself that if I could get full of electricity for the purpose of lightin' the gas I could get full of it for other purposes, and so, without losin' a moment, I set to work. I stood up on one of the seats, which was dry, and rubbed the bottoms of my shoes backward and forward on it with such violence and swiftness that they pretty soon got warm and I began fillin' with electricity, and when I was fully charged with it from my toes to the top of my head, I just sprang into the water and swam ashore. Of course I couldn't sink, bein' full of electricity."

Captain Bird heaved a long sigh and rose to his feet, whereupon the other mariners rose to their feet. "Madam," said Captain Bird, "what's to pay for the supper and—the rest of the entertainment?"

"The supper is twenty-five cents apiece," said the Widow Ducket, "and everything else is free, gratis."

Whereupon each mariner put his hand into his trousers pocket, pulled out a silver quarter, and handed it to the widow. Then, with four solemn "Good evenin's," they went out to the front gate.

"Cast off, Captain Jenkinson," said Captain Bird, "and you, Captain Burress, clew him up for'ard. You can stay in the bow, Captain Sanderson, and take the sheet-lines. I'll go aft."

All being ready, each of the elderly mariners clambered over a wheel, and having seated themselves, they prepared to lay their course for Cuppertown.

But just as they were about to start, Captain Jenkinson asked that they lay to a bit, and clambering down over his wheel, he reentered the front gate and went up to the door of the house, where the widow and Dorcas were still standing.

"Madam," said he, "I just came back to ask what be-

came of your brother-in-law through his wife's not bein' able to put no light in the window?"

"The storm drove him ashore on our side of the bay," said she, "and the next mornin' he came up to our house, and I told him all that had happened to me. And when he took our boat and went home and told that story to his wife, she just packed up and went out West, and got divorced from him. And it served him right, too."

"Thank you, ma'am," said Captain Jenkinson, and going out of the gate, he clambered up over the wheel, and the wagon cleared for Cuppertown.

When the elderly mariners were gone, the Widow Ducket, still standing in the door, turned to Dorcas.

"Think of it!" she said "To tell all that to me, in my own house! And after I had opened my one jar of brandied peaches, that I'd been keepin' for special company!"

"In your own house!" ejaculated Dorcas. "And not one of them brandied peaches left!"

The widow jingled the four quarters in her hand before she slipped them into her pocket.

"Anyway, Dorcas," she remarked, "I think we can now say we are square with all the world, and so let's go in and wash the dishes."

"Yes," said Dorcas, "we're square."

THE COUNT AND THE WEDDING GUEST

BY O. HENRY

THE COUNT AND THE WEDDING GUEST

By O. HENRY

ONE evening when Andy Donovan went to dinner at his Second Avenue boarding-house, Mrs. Scott introduced him to a new boarder, a young lady, Miss Conway. Miss Conway was small and unobtrusive. She wore a plain, snuffy-brown dress, and bestowed her interest, which seemed languid, upon her plate. She lifted her diffident eyelids and shot one perspicuous, judicial glance at Mr. Donovan, politely murmured his name, and returned to her mutton. Mr. Donovan bowed with the grace and beaming smile that were rapidly winning for him social, business and political advancement, and erased the snuffy-brown one from the tablets of his consideration.

Two weeks later Andy was sitting on the front steps enjoying his cigar. There was a soft rustle behind and above him, and Andy turned his head—and had his head turned.

Just coming out the door was Miss Conway. She wore a night-black dress of *crêpe de—crêpe de*—oh, this thin black goods. Her hat was black, and from it drooped and fluttered an ebon veil, filmy as a spider's web. She stood on the top step and drew on black silk gloves. Not a speck of white or a spot of color about her dress anywhere. Her rich golden hair was drawn, with scarcely a ripple, into a shining, smooth knot low on her neck. Her face was plain rather than pretty, but it was now illuminated and made almost beautiful by her large gray eyes that gazed above the houses across the street into the sky with an expression of the most appealing sadness and melancholy.

Gather the idea, girls—all black, you know, with the preference for *crêpe de*—oh, *crêpe de Chine*—that's it. All

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black, and that sad, faraway look, and the hair shining under the black veil (you have to be a blonde, of course), and try to look as if, although your young life had been blighted just as it was about to give a hop-skip-and-a-jump over the threshold of life, a walk in the park might do you good, and be sure to happen out the door at the right moment, and —oh, it'll fetch 'em every time. But it's fierce, now, how cynical I am, ain't it?—to talk about mourning costumes this way.

Mr. Donovan suddenly reinscribed Miss Conway upon the tablets of his consideration. He threw away the remaining inch-and-a-quarter of his cigar, that would have been good for eight minutes yet, and quickly shifted his center of gravity to his low-cut patent leathers.

"It's a fine, clear evening, Miss Conway," he said; and if the Weather Bureau could have heard the confident emphasis of his tones it would have hoisted the square white signal and nailed it to the mast.

"To them that has the heart to enjoy it, it is, Mr. Donovan," said Miss Conway, with a sigh.

Mr. Donovan in his heart cursed fair weather. Heartless weather! It should hail and blow and snow to be consonant with the mood of Miss Conway.

"I hope none of your relatives—I hope you haven't sustained a loss?" ventured Mr. Donovan.

"Death has claimed," said Miss Conway, hesitating—"not a relative, but one who—but I will not intrude my grief upon you, Mr. Donovan."

"Intrude?" protested Mr. Donovan. "Why, say, Miss Conway, I'd be delighted, that is, I'd be sorry—I mean I'm sure nobody could sympathize with you truer than I would."

Miss Conway smiled a little smile. And oh, it was sadder than her expression in repose.

"'Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and they give you the laugh,'" she quoted.

"I have learned that, Mr. Donovan. I have no friends or acquaintances in this city. But you have been kind to me. I appreciate it highly."

He had passed her the pepper twice at the table.

"It's tough to be alone in New York—that's a cinch," said Mr. Donovan. "But, say—whenever this little old town does loosen up and get friendly it goes the limit. Say you took a little stroll in the park, Miss Conway—don't you think it might chase away some of your mullygrubs? And if you'd allow me—"

"Thanks, Mr. Donovan. I'd be pleased to accept of your escort if you think the company of one whose heart is filled with gloom could be anyways agreeable to you."

Through the open gates of the iron-railed, old, downtown park, where the elect once took the air, they strolled and found a quiet bench.

There is this difference between the grief of youth and that of old age: youth's burden is lightened by as much of it as another shares; old age may give and give, but the sorrow remains the same.

"He was my fiancé," confided Miss Conway, at the end of an hour. "We were going to be married next spring. I don't want you to think that I am stringing you, Mr. Donovan, but he was a real Count. He had an estate and a castle in Italy. Count Fernando Mazzini was his name. I never saw the beat of him for elegance. Papa objected, of course, and once we eloped, but papa overtook us, and took us back. I thought sure papa and Fernando would fight a duel. Papa has a livery business—in P'kipsee, you know.

"Finally, papa came around all right, and said we might be married next spring. Fernando showed him proofs of his title and wealth, and then went over to Italy to get the castle fixed up for us. Papa's very proud, and when Fernando wanted to give me several thousand dollars for my trousseau he called him down something awful. He wouldn't even let me take a ring or any presents from him. And when Fernando sailed I came to the city and got a position as cashier in a candy store.

"Three days ago I got a letter from Italy, forwarded from P'kipsee, saying that Fernando had been killed in a gondola accident.

"That is why I am in mourning. My heart, Mr. Donovan, will remain forever in his grave. I guess I am poor

company, Mr. Donovan, but I can not take any interest in no one. I should not care to keep you from gaiety and your friends who can smile and entertain you. Perhaps you would prefer to walk back to the house?"

Now, girls, if you want to observe a young man hustle out after a pick and shovel, just tell him that your heart is in some other fellow's grave. Young men are grave-robbers by nature. Ask any widow. Something must be done to restore that missing organ to weeping girls in *crêpe de Chine*. Dead men certainly get the worst of it from all sides.

"I'm awful sorry," said Mr. Donovan gently. "No, we won't walk back to the house just yet. And don't say you haven't no friends in this city, Miss Conway. I'm awful sorry, and I want you to believe I'm your friend, and that I'm awful sorry."

"I've got his picture here in my locket," said Miss Conway, after wiping her eyes with her handkerchief. "I never showed it to anybody, but I will to you, Mr. Donovan, because I believe you to be a true friend."

Mr. Donovan gazed long and with much interest at the photograph in the locket that Miss Conway opened for him. The face of Count Mazzini was one to command interest. It was a smooth, intelligent, bright, almost a handsome face—the face of a strong, cheerful man who might well be a leader among his fellows.

"I have a larger one, framed, in my room," said Miss Conway. "When we return I will show you that. They are all I have to remind me of Fernando. But he ever will be present in my heart, that's a sure thing."

A subtle task confronted Mr. Donovan—that of supplanting the unfortunate Count in the heart of Miss Conway. This his admiration for her determined him to do. But the magnitude of the undertaking did not seem to weigh upon his spirits. The sympathetic but cheerful friend was the rôle he essayed, and he played it so successfully that the next half-hour found them conversing pensively across two plates of ice-cream, though yet there was no diminution of the sadness in Miss Conway's large gray eyes.

Before they parted in the hall that evening she ran upstairs and brought down the framed photograph wrapped

lovingly in a white silk scarf. Mr. Donovan surveyed it with inscrutable eyes.

"He gave me this the night he left for Italy," said Miss Conway. "I had one for the locket made from this."

"A fine-looking man," said Mr. Donovan heartily. "How would it suit you, Miss Conway, to give me the pleasure of your company to Coney next Sunday afternoon?"

A month later they announced their engagement to Mrs. Scott and the other boarders. Miss Conway continued to wear black.

A week after the announcement the two sat on the same bench in the downtown park, while the fluttering leaves of the trees made a dim kinetoscopic picture of them in the moonlight. But Donovan had worn a look of abstracted gloom all day. He was so silent to-night that love's lips could not keep back any longer the question that love's heart propounded.

"What's the matter, Andy, you are so solemn and grouchy to-night?"

"Nothing, Maggie."

"I know better. Can't I tell? You never acted this way before. What is it?"

"It's nothing much, Maggie."

"Yes it is, and I want to know. I'll bet it's some other girl you are thinking about. All right. Why don't you go and get her if you want her? Take your arm away, if you please."

"I'll tell you then," said Andy wisely; "but I guess you won't understand it exactly. You've heard of Mike Sullivan, haven't you? 'Big Mike' Sullivan, everybody calls him."

"No, I haven't," said Maggie. "And I don't want to, if he makes you act like this. Who is he?"

"He's the biggest man in New York," said Andy, almost reverently. "He can do about anything he wants to with Tammany or any other old thing in the political line. He's a mile high and as broad as East River. You say anything against Big Mike and you'll have a million men on your collarbone in about two seconds. Why, he made a visit over to the old country awhile back, and the kings took to their holes like rabbits.

"Well, Big Mike's a friend of mine. I ain't more than deuce-high in the district as far as influence goes, but Mike's as good a friend to a little man, or a poor man, as he is to a big one. I met him to-day on the Bowery, and what do you think he does? Comes up and shakes hands. 'Andy,' says he, 'I've been keeping cases on you. You've been putting in some good licks over on your side of the street, and I'm proud of you. What'll you take to drink?' He takes a cigar, and I take a highball. I told him I was going to get married in two weeks. 'Andy,' says he, 'send me an invitation, so I'll keep in mind of it, and I'll come to the wedding.' That's what Big Mike says to me; and he always does what he says.

"You don't understand it, Maggie, but I'd have one of my hands cut off to have Big Mike Sullivan at our wedding. It would be the proudest day of my life. When he goes to a man's wedding there's a guy being married that's made for life. Now, that's why I've maybe been looking sore to-night."

"Why don't you invite him, then, if he's so much to the mustard?" said Maggie lightly.

"There's a reason why I can't," said Andy sadly. "There's a reason why he mustn't be there. Don't ask me what it is, for I can't tell you."

"Oh, I don't care," said Maggie. "It's something about politics, of course. But it's no reason why you can't smile at me."

"Maggie," said Andy presently, "do you think as much of me as you did of your—as you did of the Count Mazzini?"

He waited a long time, but Maggie did not reply. And then, suddenly she leaned against his shoulder and began to cry—to cry and shake with sobs, holding his arm tightly and wetting the *crêpe de Chine* with tears.

"There, there, there!" soothed Andy, putting aside his own trouble. "And what is it now?"

"Andy," sobbed Maggie, "I've lied to you and you'll never marry me, or love me any more. But I feel that I've got to tell. Andy, there never was so much as the little finger of a count. I never had a beau in my life. But all the other girls had, and they talked about 'em, and that seemed to make the fellows like 'em more. And, Andy, I look swell in black—you know I do. So I went out to a photograph

store and bought that picture, and had a little one made for my locket, and made up all that story about the Count and about his being killed, so I could wear black. And nobody can love a liar and you'll shake me, Andy, and I'll die for shame. Oh, there never was anybody I liked but you—and that's all."

But instead of being pushed away she found Andy's arm folding her closely. She looked up and saw his face cleared and smiling.

"Could you—could you forgive me, Andy?"

'Sure," said Andy. "It's all right about that. Back to the cemetery for the Count. You've straightened everything out, Maggie. I was in hopes you would before the wedding-day. Bully girl!"

"Andy," said Maggie with a somewhat shy smile, after she had been thoroughly assured of forgiveness, "did you believe all that story about the Count?"

"Well, not to any large extent," said Andy, reaching for his cigar-case; "because it's Big Mike Sullivan's picture you've got in that locket of yours."

MISS TOOKER'S WEDDING GIFT

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

MISS TOOKER'S WEDDING GIFT

By JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

I

VAN BUREN tossed his gloves impatiently on the table, removed his overcoat, and sat down before the fire. He was apparently deeply concerned about something, for when Niki, his Japanese valet, entered the room and placed the whisky and soda on the little table at his side, Van Buren paid no more attention to him than he would to a vagrant sunmote that crossed his path. Long and steadily he gazed into the broad fireplace, watching the dancing flames at play, pausing only to light his pipe, upon which he pulled fiercely. Finally he spoke, leaning forward and to all intents and purposes addressing the andirons.

"Confound the money!" he said impatiently. "I wish to thunder the Governor had left it to some orphan asylum or to found a Chair in Choctaw at some New England university, instead of to me—then I might have made something of myself. Here am I twenty-seven years old and all the fame I ever got came from leading cotillions at Newport, and my sole contribution to the common weal has consisted of the fines I've paid into the public treasury for exceeding the speed limit. Life! I've seen a lot of it—haven't I, in this empty social shell I've been born into!"

He paused for a moment and poured a stiff four fingers of whisky into a glass at his side.

"Bah!" he shuddered as the odor of it greeted his nostrils. "You're a poor kind of fuel for such an engine as I might have been if I'd been started on the right track. By Jove! Ethel is right. What good am I? What have I ever done to make myself worth while or to show that I have

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any character in me that is a jot better than that of any of the rest of our poor stenciled, gold-plated society."

He looked at the glass and made a wry face.

"I'll cut *you* out anyhow," he said, pushing the liquor away from him. "That's something. Niki!" he called.

The inscrutable Niki obeyed the summons on the word.

"Take that stuff away and hereafter don't bring it unless I call for it," said Van Buren. "Any letters?"

"One," said Niki. "A messenger brought him at eight o'clock. I get it."

Niki went to the escritoire and picked up the little square of blue envelope lying thereon and handed it to Van Buren.

"Thank you, Niki. You may go now—I can get along without you until—well, say noon to-morrow. Good night."

"Good night," said Niki, and withdrew noiselessly.

"Humph!" ejaculated Van Buren. "Even he is worth more to the world than I am. He does something, even if it is only for me, which is more than I can do. I don't seem to be able to do anything even for myself."

With a sigh of discontent, Van Buren poked the fire for a moment and then settled himself in the armchair, holding the letter before his eyes as he did so.

"From Ethel," he said. "Probably my death-warrant. Oh, well—why not? If she won't have me, she won't, that's all. Only one more drop of bitters in my cocktail. I may as well read it anyhow. It's like a cold plunge, and I hate to take it, but—here goes."

He tore open the envelope and, extracting the note, read it:

Dear Harry—I have been thinking things over since you left me this afternoon and I have changed my mind. [Van Buren's eyes lighted with hope.] I *do* care for you, but I can not see much happiness ahead for either of us unless one or the other of us changes radically. It may be my fault, but I can not forget that if I married a man I should want always to be proud of him, and ambitious for his success in the world. If I were not ambitious, I could be proud of you just as you are, for I know you for the fine fellow that you are. While you do none of the things that I should love to

have my future husband do, you at least do none of those other things that men make a practise of, and that mean so much misery for their womenkind, whether they show it or not. But, dear Harry, why can you not make yourself more of a man than you are? Why be content with just the splendid foundation, and let it lie, gradually disintegrating because you have failed to rear upon it some kind of a superstructure that would be in keeping with what rests beneath? You can—I know you can—and that is why I have decided to withdraw what appeared to be my final answer of this afternoon, and, if you want it, to give you another chance.

"*If* I want it!" ejaculated Van Buren. "Lord knows how I want it!"

Come to me at the end of a year and show me the record of something accomplished, that lifts you out of this awful social rut we have all managed to get into, and my "no" of this afternoon may be turned into a "yes," and the misery of my heart be turned to joy. Of course you will say that it is all very easy for me to write this, and to tell you to go out and do something, but that the hard thing would be to tell you what to go out and do—and you will be perfectly right. General advice is the easiest thing in the world, but the specific, constructive suggestion is very different. So I will give you the specific suggestion, and it is this: Why do you not write a novel? You used in your days at Harvard to write clever skits for the "Lampoon," and one or two of your little stories in the "Advocate" showed that you at least know how to put words and sentences together in a pleasing way, even if the themes of your stories were slight and the plots not very intricate. Do this, Harry. Surely with your experience in life you can think of something to write about. Apply yourself to this work during the coming year, and when your book is published and has proven a success, come to me again, and maybe I shall have some good news to tell you.

It may be, dear Harry, that you will not think it worth while. For myself, I hardly think the prize is worth the winning, but you seem to feel differently about that, if I may

judge from what you said this afternoon, and you *did* seem to mean it all, every word of it, you poor boy.

We shall meet, of course, as frequently as ever, but until the year is up, and that a year of achievement, you must not speak of the matter again, and must regard me as I shall hope in any event always to remain,

Your devoted friend,

ETHEL TOOKER.

Van Buren laughed nervously, as he finished the letter, and again lit his pipe, which had gone out while he read.

"Write a novel, eh?" he muttered with a grin. "A nice, easy task that. A hundred and fifty thousand words, all meaning something. Ah me! Why the dickens wasn't I born in an age when knighthood was in flower and my Lady Fayre set Sir Hubert some easy task like putting on a tin suit and going out on the highway and swatting another potted Sir Bedivere on the head with an antique ax? The Quest of the Golden Fleece was an easy stunt alongside of writing a novel these times, and I fear I'm more of a Jason than a Henry James!"

He turned to his desk, and the next five minutes were devoted to the writing of an acknowledgment of Miss Tooker's letter.

I thank you for your suggestion [he wrote], and I truly think it will bear thinking over. Any suggestion that makes for the realization of my fondest hopes will bear thinking over, and I am going to do what I can. I wish you had set me an easier task, however, like getting myself appointed Ambassador to England, or Excise Commissioner, for honestly I do not feel the call of the pen. Nevertheless, my dearest Ethel, just to prove to you how honestly devoted to you I am, I shall to-morrow lay in a stock of pads, a brand new pen, and a new Roosevelt Dictionary to guide me into the short cut to success via the Reformed Spelling Route. I have already got my leading characters—my heroine and my hero. She is the sweetest, fairest, dearest girl in the world, and is to be named Ethel. The hero is to be a miserable, down-and-out young cub of a millionaire who, having

been brought up in a hot-house atmosphere, never had a chance when exposed to the chilling blasts of the world. She, of course, will redeem poor Harry—that is to be my hero's name—from the pitfalls of bridge, Newport, and the demon Rum. And, of course, she will marry him in the end.

Ever your devoted

HARRY.

P. S. As expressive of my real feelings, my story will be written in blue ink.

II

Late one evening, six months later, Van Buren rose wearily from his desk, but with a light of triumph in his eye.

"There!" he said. "That is done. 'The City of Credit' is at last *un fait accompli*. One hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred and sixty-seven words, and all about Newport, with a bit of the life of its thriving suburbs, New York and Boston, thrown in to relieve the sordidness of it all."

He gazed affectionately at the pile of manuscript before him.

"It hasn't been half bad, after all," he said. "The first ten thousand words came like water from a fire hose, the second ten thousand were pure dentistry, tooth-pulling extraordinary, and the rest of it—well, it is queer how when you get interested in shoveling coal how easy it all seems. And now for the hardest end of the job. To find a publisher who is weak-minded enough to print it."

This indeed proved much the hardest part of Van Buren's work, for the reluctance of the large publishing houses of New York and Boston to place their imprint upon the title-page of "The City of Credit" became painfully evident to the youthful author. The manuscript came back to Van Buren with a frequency that was more than ominous.

"I think," he remarked ruefully to himself upon the occasion of its sixth rejection, "that I have discovered the principle of perpetual motion. If there were only enough publishers in the world to last through all eternity, I could keep this manuscript going forever."

Days passed and with no glimmer of hope, until one morning at a time when "The City of Credit" was about due for its thirteenth reappearance on his desk Van Buren found in its stead a letter from Hutchins & Waterbury, of Boston, apprising him of the fact that his novel had been read and was so well liked that "our Mr. Waterbury will be pleased to have Mr. Van Buren call to discuss a possible arrangement under which the firm would be willing to undertake its publication."

"Good Lord!" cried Van Buren as he read the letter over for the third time, even then barely crediting the possibilities of success that now loomed before him. "And Boston people, too! Will I call! Niki, pack my suit-case at once, and engage a seat for me on the Knickerbocker Limited."

The following morning an interview between "our Mr. Waterbury" and Van Buren took place in the firm's private office on Tremont Street, Boston. It appeared that while the readers of the firm of Hutchins & Waterbury had unanimously condemned the book, Mr. Waterbury, himself, having read it, rather thought it might have a living chance.

"Some portions of your narrative are brilliant, and some of them are otherwise, Mr. Van Buren," said Mr. Waterbury frankly. "But considering the authorship of the book and that it is a description of Newport life by one who is a part of its innermost circle, I am inclined to think it will prove interesting to the public. Your picture of the social wheels within wheels is so intimate, and I judge so accurate, that it would attract attention."

"I am glad you think so," said Van Buren, with a dry throat—the idea that his book might be published after all was really overpowering.

"On the other hand, the judgment of our readers is so unanimously adverse that Mr. Hutchins and I feel the need of proceeding cautiously. Now, what would you say to our publishing the book on—ah—on your account, as it were?"

"You want me to—" began Van Buren.

"To pay for the plates and advertising," said Mr. Waterbury. "We will stand for the paper and the binding, and will act as your agents in the distribution of the book, accounting to you for every copy printed and sold."

"Is—is that quite *en regle?*" asked Van Buren dubiously.

"It is quite customary," replied Mr. Waterbury. "In fact, ninety per cent of our business is conducted upon that basis."

"I see," said Van Buren.

"You hand us your check for twenty-five hundred dollars to cover the expenses I have specified," continued the astute publisher, "and we will publish your book, allowing you a royalty of fifty per cent on every copy sold."

"I suppose the first edition would be—" said Van Buren hesitatingly.

"Five hundred copies," said Waterbury. "The smaller your first edition, the sooner you are likely to go into a second, and, as you know, it is a great advantage for a book to go into a second edition quickly, if only for advertising purposes. Think it over, and let me know this afternoon if you can. I have to leave for Chicago to-night, and if we are to have 'The City of Credit' ready for the autumn trade, we should begin work on it right away."

"I understand," said Van Buren. "Well—I—I guess it's all right. It's only the principle of the thing—but if, as you say, it is quite customary—why, yes. I'll give you my check now. Do you want it certified?"

"That will not be at all necessary, Mr. Van Buren," said Waterbury magnanimously. "We are quite aware that your own signature to a check is a sufficient certification."

The afternoon train for Newport carried Van Buren back to the social capital with a contract in his pocket, signed by Messrs. Hutchins & Waterbury, assuring the early publication of "The City of Credit," but in view of certain of its financial stipulations, jubilant as he was over the success of his first real step toward fame, Van Buren did not show it to Miss Tooker, as he might have done had it contained no reference to a check on the Tenth National Bank of New York calling for the payment of two thousand five hundred dollars to the Boston firm of publishers.

III

In September "The City of Credit" was published, and widely advertised by Messrs. Hutchins & Waterbury, and Van Buren took particular pains to secure the first copy from the press and to send it by messenger with a suitable inscription and a note to Miss Tooker.

"I send you my book," he wrote, "not because I think it is worth reading, but for the double purpose of showing you that I have tried my best to fulfil your wishes, and to assure the work of at least the circulation of one copy. It has all of my heart in it."

For one reason or another, doubtless because there were quite five hundred other novels of a similar character put forth about the same time, by the end of October the world had not yet been consumed by any conflagration of Van Buren's lighting.

"The book hangs fire," said Mr. Waterbury when Van Buren called upon him at his Boston office to inquire how things were going. "We printed five hundred copies, and this morning's report shows two hundred and thirty still on hand. A hundred and sixty were sent for review."

"I wish they hadn't been," said Van Buren, with a rueful smile. "They have provided just one hundred and sixty separate pieces of fuel for the critics to roast me with. Have there been any favorable reviews of the book?"

"None that I have seen—but don't you worry about that," replied Mr. Waterbury comfortingly. "It's the counting-room, not the critics, that tell the story. Something may happen yet to pull us out."

"What, for instance?" asked Van Buren.

"Oh, I don't know," said Waterbury. "You might do something sensational and get it in the papers. That would help. It's up to you, Mr. Van Buren."

"I guess I'm all in," said Van Buren to himself as he walked down Tremont Street. "Up to me to do something—by Jove!" he interrupted himself abruptly. He had suddenly espied a copy of "The City of Credit" in a shop window. "Up to me, is it? Well, I think I shall rise to the occasion and not by doing anything sensational either."

He entered the shop.

"I want six copies of 'The City of Credit,'" he said quietly to the salesman. "It's a first-class story. Much of a demand for it?"

"No," said the salesman. "We have only the window copy, and we've had that over a month. I can get them for you, however."

"All right," said Van Buren. "Just send them to Charles H. Harney, The Helicon Club, New York. I'll pay for them now."

Van Buren paid his bill, and, returning to the street, hailed a hansom.

"Take me to some good book-shop," he said to the cabby.

Instanter he was whirled around into Winter Street, where stands one of Boston's most famous literary distributing centers.

"Have you 'The City of Credit'?" he asked the salesman.

"I think we have a copy in stock," replied the latter. "If we haven't, we can get it for you."

"Do so, please," said Van Buren. "I want a dozen copies—send them by express to Charles H. Harney, The Helicon Club, New York. How much?"

"It's a dollar and a half book, I think," said the clerk. "The discount will make it $1.20—a dozen, did you say? Twenty-five cents expressage—that will make it $14.65."

Van Buren paid up without a whimper. Once in the hansom again, he called up through the little hole in the top.

"Isn't there any other book-shop in town where I can get what I want?" he demanded.

"There's a dozen of 'em," replied the cabby.

"Then go to them all," said Van Buren.

That night when Van Buren started for New York he had purchased a hundred and fifty copies of "The City of Credit," and had ordered them all to be addressed to the clerk at the Helicon Club, with whom, upon his arrival in town, he arranged for their immediate reshipment to the Harrison Safety Deposit Storage Company on Forty-second Street.

"I'm going to have my happiness, if I have to buy it," Van Buren muttered doggedly, as he crept into bed shortly

after midnight. And then, tossing sleeplessly in his bed and at last rejoicing in the possession of his late father's millions to back him in his enterprise, he laid the foundations of a plan comparable only to that of the Wheat King who corners the market, or the man of Cotton who loads himself up with more bales of that useful commodity than all the fertile acres of the South could raise in seven seasons. Orders were despatched by wire and by mail to all the booksellers in the land whose names and addresses Van Buren could get hold of. Department stores were put under contribution and their stock commandeered, and one of the biggest booms in the whole history of literature set in.

"The City of Credit" went into its second, fifth, twentieth, fiftieth large edition. Hutchins & Waterbury wrote Van Buren stating that a sudden turn in the market had made his book one of the six best sellers not only of this century but of all centuries. Their presses were seething to the point of white heat with the copies of "The City of Credit" needed to supply the demand; their binders were working day and night with a double force, and their shipping department was pretty nearly swamped with the strain put upon it. "Your royalty check on January 1st will be the fattest in the land," wrote Waterbury in a moment of enthusiasm. "We are thinking of sending our staff of readers to the lunatic asylum and getting an entirely new set. An order for four thousand has come in from Chicago this morning. St. Louis wants fifteen hundred, and pretty nearly every other able-bodied town in the country is asking for from one to one hundred and fifty." By Christmas time, if the publishers' announcements were to be believed, "The City of Credit" had attained to the enormous sale of three hundred and fifty thousand, and Van Buren was in receipt of a letter from a literary periodical asking for his photograph for publication in its February issue. This brought him a realization of the fact that he might now fairly claim to be considered a literary success. At any rate, he felt that he had now a right to approach Miss Tooker with a fair prospect of receiving from her a favorable answer to the question which she had a year before left an open one.

And events showed that his feeling was justified, for two

days later he enjoyed the blissful sensation of finding himself the accepted lover of the woman he had tried so hard to please.

"Is it to be—yes?" he whispered, as they sat together in the conservatory of her father's city house.

"It has—always been—yes," she replied softly, and then what happened is not for your eyes or mine. Suffice it to say that Van Buren moved immediately from sordid old New York to become a dweller in the higher altitudes of Elysium.

Incidentally the boom in "The City of Credit" stopped almost as suddenly as it had begun. There was nobody apparently who felt called upon to throw in the necessary number of dollars to sustain an already over-stimulated market, which puzzled Messrs. Hutchins & Waterbury exceedingly. They had hoped to live for the balance of their days upon the profits of their World's Best Seller.

IV

As the spring approached and the day set for Miss Tooker's wedding to Van Buren came nearer, the latter found himself daily becoming more and more a prey to conscience. There was a decidedly large fly in the amber of his happiness, for as he viewed the part he had played in the forced success of "The City of Credit" he began to see it in its true light. The first of March brought him his royalty check from Hutchins & Waterbury, and it was, as had been predicted, gratifyingly large, and reduced materially what he had called his "campaign expenses." In the same mail, however, was a bill from the Storage Company, in one of whose spacious chambers there reposed more copies of his novel than he liked to think of—over 250,000—the actual sales had been 260,000 in spite of the published announcements of a higher figure. The firm had thirty or forty thousand on hand, printed in a moment of confident enthusiasm when the flurry was at its height. Both communications brought before Van Buren's mind's eye all too vividly the specter of his duplicity, and he was too much of a man of conscience to be able to put it lightly aside. He tried to console himself with

the idea that all is fair in love and war, but he could not, and his remorse caused him many a sleepless night. Finally—it was on the eve of the posting of the wedding invitations—scruple overcame him, and he resolved that he could not honestly lead his bride to the altar with such a record of deceit upon his escutcheon, especially in view of the fact that it was through this deceit that his happiness had been won.

"It is better to lose her before the ceremony than after it," he told himself, and, bitter though the confidence might be, he made up his mind to tell Miss Tooker everything. "Only, I must break it gently," he observed.

With this difficult errand in mind, he called upon his fiancée, and, after the usual greeting, he started in on his confession. He had hardly begun it, however, when his courage failed him, and with the oozing of that his words failed him also. He did have the courage, however, to seek to reveal the exact situation in another way.

"Ethel dear," he said, awkwardly fumbling his gloves, "I want to show you something. I have a—a little surprise for you."

The girl eyed him narrowly.

"For me?" she said.

"Yes," he answered. "The fact is, it's—it's a sort of wedding present I have for you, and I think you ought to see it before—well, *now*. Will you go?"

Miss Tooker was interested at once, and, taking a hansom, they were driven to the Harrison Storage Warehouse on Forty-second Street. Arrived there, Van Buren led her to the elevator and thence up to the small room in which lay the corroding and tell-tale packages—an enormous bulk—that were slowly but surely eating up his happiness.

"Why, Harry!" she cried as she gazed in bewilderment at the huge pile of unopened bundles. "Are these all for me?"

"Yes," gulped Van Buren, his face flaming.

"But—what do they contain?" she asked.

"Two hundred and fifty thousand copies of my—my book—'The City of Credit,'" said Van Buren, his eyes cast down.

"You mean that you—" she began.

"Yes, it's exactly that, Ethel. I—I bought 'em all to—well, to boom the sales and to—make a name for myself in the world," he said sheepishly, "or rather for you—but I suppose now that you know—"

"Then all this tremendous sale was arranged between you and your publishers to deceive me?" she asked.

"Not at all," protested the unhappy Van Buren. "On the contrary, I did it all myself. Hutchins & Waterbury don't know any more about it than you did an hour ago. No one knows—except you and me."

Van Buren paused.

"I could not let you marry me without knowing what I had done," he said. "It would not be fair to—to our future."

"Tell me all about it," she said quietly, and Van Buren made his confession complete. He told her of his interview with Waterbury—how the latter had told him his book had fallen flat; how it was "up to him" to do something; how a sight of a single copy of "The City of Credit" in the Tremont Street shop window had tempted him first into a retail fall which had grown ultimately into a wholesale "crime"—as he put it. He did not spare himself in the least degree, humiliating as the narration of his story was to him.

"I suppose it is all up with me now," he said ruefully, when he had finished.

"I don't know," said Ethel quietly. "I don't know, Harry. Perhaps. Take me home, please. I want to show you something."

The drive back to the Tooker mansion was taken in silence. Van Buren despised himself too strongly to be able to speak, and Miss Tooker had fallen into a deep reverie which the poor fellow at her side feared meant irrevocable ruin to his hopes.

"Come in," said Miss Tooker gravely, as the cab drew up at the house. "I want to take you up into our attic storeroom, and then ask you a plain question, Harry, and then I want you to answer that question simply and truthfully."

Marveling much, Van Buren permitted himself to be led to the topmost floor of Miss Tooker's house.

"Look in there," said she, opening the door of the storeroom. "Do you see those packages?"

"Yes," he said. "They look very much like mine, only they're fewer."

"Do you know what they contain?" she asked.

"Books?" queried Van Buren, entering the room and tapping one of the bundles.

"Yes—yours—your books—five thousand three hundred and ten copies of 'The City of Credit,' Harry," she said, with a rueful smile.

"You—" he ejaculated hoarsely.

"Yes, I bought them all. Some in Newport, some in New York, some at Lenox—oh, everywhere! Now, tell me this," she interrupted. "Do you suppose that I would condemn you for doing on a large scale what I have been doing on a smaller scale ever since last November?"

A ray of hope dawned in Van Buren's eyes.

"Ethel!" he cried, seizing her by the hand. "You bought all those—for me?"

"I certainly did, Harry," she said quietly. "With my pin money, and my bridge money and all the other kinds of money that I could wheedle out of my dear old daddy. But answer me. Have I the right to sit in judgment on you—"

"Not by a long shot!" cried Van Buren. "It would be an act of the most consummate hypocrisy."

"That is the way I look at it, dear," she whispered, and then—well, all I have to say is that I don't believe anything like what happened at that precise moment ever happened in an attic storeroom before.

And the wedding invitations were mailed that very evening.

THE FABLE OF THE TWO MANDOLIN PLAYERS

THE FABLE OF THE PREACHER WHO FLEW HIS KITE

BY GEORGE ADE

THE FABLE OF THE TWO MANDOLIN PLAYERS AND THE WILLING PERFORMER

By GEORGE ADE

A VERY attractive Débutante knew two Young Men, who called on her every Thursday Evening and brought their Mandolins along.

They were Conventional Young Men, of the Kind that you see wearing Spring Overcoats in the Clothing Advertisements. One was named Fred, and the other was Eustace.

The Mothers of the Neighborhood often remarked "What Perfect Manners Fred and Eustace have!" Merely as an aside it may be added that Fred and Eustace were more Popular with the Mothers than they were with the Younger Set, although no one could say a Word against either of them. Only it was rumored in Keen Society that they didn't Belong. The Fact that they went Calling in a Crowd, and took their Mandolins along, may give the Acute Reader some Idea of the Life that Fred and Eustace held out to the Young Women of their Acquaintance.

The Débutante's name was Myrtle. Her Parents were very Watchful, and did not encourage her to receive Callers, except such as were known to be Exemplary Young Men. Fred and Eustace were a few of those who escaped the Black List. Myrtle always appeared to be glad to see them, and they regarded her as a Darned Swell Girl.

Fred's Cousin came from St. Paul on a Visit; and one Day, in the Street, he saw Myrtle, and noticed that Fred tipped his Hat, and gave her a Stage Smile.

"Oh, Queen of Sheba!" exclaimed the Cousin from St. Paul, whose name was Gus, as he stood stock still and watched Myrtle's Reversible Plaid disappear around a Corner. "She's a Bird. Do you know her well?"

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"I know her Quite Well," replied Fred, coldly. "She is a Charming Girl."

"She is all of that. You're a great Describer. And now what Night are you going to take me around to Call on her?"

Fred very naturally Hemmed and Hawed. It must be remembered that Myrtle was a member of an Excellent Family, and had been schooled in the Proprieties, and it was not to be supposed that she would crave the Society of slangy old Gus, who had an abounding Nerve, and furthermore was as Fresh as the Mountain Air.

He was the Kind of Fellow who would see a Girl twice, and then, upon meeting her the Third Time, he would go up and straighten her Cravat for her, and call her by her First Name.

Put him into a Strange Company—en route to a Picnic—and by the time the Baskets were unpacked he would have a Blonde all to himself, and she would have traded her Fan for his College Pin.

If a Fair-Looker on the Street happened to glance at him Hard he would run up and seize her by the Hand, and convince her that they had Met. And he always Got Away with it, too.

In a Department Store, while awaiting for the Cash Boy to come back with the Change, he would find out the Girl's Name, her Favorite Flower, and where a Letter would reach her.

Upon entering a Parlor Car at St. Paul he would select a Chair next to the Most Promising One in Sight, and ask her if she cared to have the Shade lowered.

Before the Train cleared the Yards he would have the Porter bringing a Foot-Stool for the Lady.

At Hastings he would be asking her if she wanted Something to Read.

At Red Wing he would be telling her that she resembled Maxine Elliott, and showing her his Watch, left to him by his Grandfather, a Prominent Virginian.

At La Crosse he would be reading the Menu Card to her, and telling her how different it is when you have Some One to join you in a Bite.

At Milwaukee he would go out and buy a Bouquet for her, and when they rode into Chicago they would be looking out of the same Window, and he would be arranging for her Baggage with the Transfer Man. After that they would be Old Friends.

Now, Fred and Eustace had been at School with Gus, and they had seen his Work, and they were not disposed to Introduce him into One of the most Exclusive Homes in the City.

They had known Myrtle for many Years; but they did not dare to Address her by her First Name, and they were Positive that if Gus attempted any of his usual Tactics with her she would be Offended; and, naturally enough, they would be Blamed for bringing him to the House.

But Gus insisted. He said he had seen Myrtle, and she Suited him from the Ground up, and he proposed to have Friendly Doings with her. At last they told him they would take him if he promised to Behave. Fred warned him that Myrtle would frown down any Attempt to be Familiar on Short Acquaintance, and Eustace said that as long as he had known Myrtle he had never Presumed to be Free and Forward with her. He had simply played the Mandolin. That was as Far Along as he had ever got.

Gus told them not to Worry about him. All he asked was a Start. He said he was a Willing Performer, but as yet he never had been Disqualified for Crowding.

Fred and Eustace took this to mean that he would not Overplay his Attentions, so they escorted him to the House.

As soon as he had been Presented, Gus showed her where to sit on the Sofa, then he placed himself about Six Inches away and began to Buzz, looking her straight in the Eye. He said that when he first saw her he Mistook her for Miss Prentice, who was said to be the Most Beautiful Girl in St. Paul, only, when he came closer, he saw that it couldn't be Miss Prentice, because Miss Prentice didn't have such Lovely Hair. Then he asked her the Month of her Birth and told her Fortune, thereby coming nearer to Holding her Hand within Eight Minutes than Eustace had come in a Lifetime.

"Play something, Boys," he Ordered, just as if he had paid them Money to come along and make Music for him.

They unlimbered their Mandolins and began to play a Sousa March. He asked Myrtle if she had seen the New Moon. She replied that she had not, so they went Outside.

When Fred and Eustace finished the first Piece, Gus appeared at the open Window, and asked them to play "The Georgia Camp-Meeting," which had always been one of his Favorites.

So they played that, and when they had Concluded there came a Voice from the Outer Darkness, and it was the Voice of Myrtle. She said: "I'll tell you what to Play; play the Intermezzo."

Fred and Eustace exchanged Glances. They began to Perceive that they had been backed into a Siding. With a few Potted Palms in front of them, and two Cards from the Union, they would have been just the same as a Hired Orchestra.

But they played the Intermezzo and felt Peevish. Then they went to the Window and looked out. Gus and Myrtle were sitting in the Hammock, which had quite a Pitch toward the Center. Gus had braced himself by Holding to the back of the Hammock. He did not have his Arm around Myrtle, but he had it Extended in a Line parallel with her Back. What he had done wouldn't Justify a Girl in saying, "Sir!" but it started a Real Scandal with Fred and Eustace. They saw that the Only Way to Get Even with her was to go Home without saying "Good Night." So they slipped out the Side Door, shivering with Indignation.

After that, for several Weeks, Gus kept Myrtle so Busy that she had no Time to think of considering other Candidates. He sent Books to her Mother, and allowed the Old Gentleman to take Chips away from him at Poker.

They were Married in the Autumn, and Father-in-Law took Gus into the Firm, saying that he had needed a good Pusher for a Long Time.

At the Wedding the two Mandolin Players were permitted to act as Ushers.

MORAL: *To get a fair Trial of Speed use a Pace-Maker.*

THE FABLE OF THE PREACHER WHO FLEW HIS KITE, BUT NOT BECAUSE HE WISHED TO DO SO

By GEORGE ADE

A CERTAIN Preacher became wise to the Fact that he was not making a Hit with his Congregation. The Parishioners did not seem inclined to seek him out after Services and tell him he was a Pansy. He suspected that they were Rapping him on the Quiet. The Preacher knew there must be something wrong with his Talk. He had been trying to Expound in a clear and straightforward Manner, omitting Foreign Quotations, setting up for illustration of his Points such Historical Characters as were familiar to his Hearers, putting the stubby Old English words ahead of the Latin, and rather flying low along the Intellectual Plane of the Aggregation that chipped in to pay his Salary. But the Pew-Holders were not tickled. They could Understand everything he said, and they began to think he was Common.

So he studied the Situation and decided that if he wanted to Win them and make everybody believe he was a Nobby and Boss Minister he would have to hand out a little Guff. He fixed it up Good and Plenty.

On the following Sunday Morning he got up in the Lookout and read a Text that didn't mean anything, read from either Direction, and then he sized up his Flock with a Dreamy Eye and said: "We can not more adequately voice the Poetry and Mysticism of our Text than in those familiar Lines of the great Icelandic Poet, Ikon Navrojk:

> "To hold is not to have—
> Under the seared Firmament,
> Where Chaos sweeps, and Vast Futurity
> Sneers at these puny Aspirations—
> There is the full Reprisal."

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When the Preacher concluded this Extract from the Well-Known Icelandic Poet he paused and looked downward, breathing heavily through his Nose, like Camille in the Third Act.

A Stout Woman in the Front Row put on her Eye-Glasses and leaned forward so as not to miss Anything. A Venerable Harness Dealer over at the Right nodded his Head solemnly. He seemed to recognize the Quotation. Members of the Congregation glanced at one another as if to say: "This is certainly Hot Stuff!"

The Preacher wiped his Brow and said he had no Doubt that every one within the Sound of his Voice remembered what Quarolius had said, following the same Line of Thought. It was Quarolius who disputed the Contention of the great Persian Theologian Ramtazuk, that the Soul in its reaching out after the Unknowable was guided by the Spiritual Genesis of Motive rather than by mere Impulse of Mentality. The Preacher didn't know what all This meant, and he didn't care, but you can rest easy that the Pew-Holders were On in a minute. He talked it off in just the Way that Cyrano talks when he gets Roxane so Dizzy that she nearly falls off the Piazza.

The Parishioners bit their Lower Lips and hungered for more First-Class Language. They had paid their Money for Tall Talk and were prepared to solve any and all styles of Delivery. They held on to the Cushions and seemed to be having a Nice Time.

The Preacher quoted copiously from the Great Poet Amebius. He recited 18 lines of Greek and then said: "How true this is!" And not a Parishioner batted an Eye.

It was Amebius whose Immortal Lines he recited in order to prove the Extreme Error of the Position assumed in the Controversy by the Famous Italian, Polenta.

He had them Going, and there wasn't a Thing to it. When he would get tired of faking Philosophy he would quote from a Celebrated Poet of Ecuador or Tasmania or some other Seaport Town. Compared with this Verse, all of which was of the same School as the Icelandic Masterpiece, the most obscure and clouded Passage in Robert Browning was like a Plate-Glass Front in a State Street

Candy Store just after the Colored Boy gets through using the Chamois.

After that he became Eloquent, and began to get rid of long Boston Words that hadn't been used before that Season. He grabbed a rhetorical Roman Candle in each Hand and you couldn't see him for the Sparks.

After which he sank his Voice to a Whisper and talked about the Birds and the Flowers. Then, although there was no Cue for him to Weep, he shed a few real Tears. And there wasn't a dry Glove in the church.

After he sat down he could tell by the Scared Look of the People in Front that he had made a Ten-Strike.

Did they give him the Joyous Palm that Day? Sure!

The Stout Lady could not control her Feelings when she told how much the Sermon had helped her. The venerable Harness Dealer said he wished to indorse the Able and Scholarly Criticism of Polenta.

In fact, every one said the Sermon was Superfine and Dandy. The only thing that worried the Congregation was the Fear that if it wished to retain such a Whale it might have to boost his Salary.

In the Meantime the Preacher waited for some one to come and ask about Polenta, Amebius, Ramtazuk, Quarolius and the great Icelandic Poet, Navrojk. But no one had the Face to step up and confess his Ignorance of these Celebrities. The Pew-Holders didn't even admit among themselves that the Preacher had rung in some New Ones. They stood Pat, and merely said it was an Elegant Sermon.

Perceiving that they would stand for Anything, the Preacher knew what to do after that.

MORAL: *Give the People what they Think they want.*

THE SHADOWS ON THE WALL

BY MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN

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"HENRY had words with Edward in the study the night before Edward died," said Caroline Glynn. She was elderly, tall, and harshly thin, with a hard colourlessness of face. She spoke not with acrimony, but with grave severity. Rebecca Ann Glynn, younger, stouter and rosy of face between her crinkling puffs of gray hair, gasped, by way of assent. She sat in a wide flounce of black silk in the corner of the sofa, and rolled terrified eyes from her sister Caroline to her sister Mrs. Stephen Brigham, who had been Emma Glynn, the one beauty of the family. She was beautiful still, with a large, splendid, full-blown beauty; she filled a great rocking-chair with her superb bulk of femininity, and swayed gently back and forth, her black silks whispering and her black frills fluttering. Even the shock of death (for her brother Edward lay dead in the house,) could not disturb her outward serenity of demeanour. She was grieved over the loss of her brother: he had been the youngest, and she had been fond of him, but never had Emma Brigham lost sight of her own importance amidst the waters of tribulation. She was always awake to the consciousness of her own stability in the midst of vicissitudes and the splendour of her permanent bearing.

But even her expression of masterly placidity changed before her sister Caroline's announcement and her sister Rebecca Ann's gasp of terror and distress in response.

"I think Henry might have controlled his temper, when poor Edward was so near his end," said she with an asperity which disturbed slightly the roseate curves of her beautiful mouth.

"Of course he did not know," murmured Rebecca Ann in a faint tone strangely out of keeping with her appearance.

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One involuntarily looked again to be sure that such a feeble pipe came from that full-swelling chest.

"Of course he did not know it," said Caroline quickly. She turned on her sister with a strange sharp look of suspicion. "How could he have known it?" said she. Then she shrank as if from the other's possible answer. "Of course you and I both know he could not," said she conclusively, but her pale face was paler than it had been before.

Rebecca gasped again. The married sister, Mrs. Emma Brigham, was now sitting up straight in her chair; she had ceased rocking, and was eyeing them both intently with a sudden accentuation of family likeness in her face. Given one common intensity of emotion and similar lines showed forth, and the three sisters of one race were evident.

"What do you mean?" said she impartially to them both. Then she, too, seemed to shrink before a possible answer. She even laughed an evasive sort of laugh. "I guess you don't mean anything," said she, but her face wore still the expression of shrinking horror.

"Nobody means anything," said Caroline firmly. She rose and crossed the room toward the door with grim decisiveness.

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Brigham.

"I have something to see to," replied Caroline, and the others at once knew by her tone that she had some solemn and sad duty to perform in the chamber of death.

"Oh," said Mrs. Brigham.

After the door had closed behind Caroline, she turned to Rebecca.

"Did Henry have many words with him?" she asked.

"They were talking very loud," replied Rebecca evasively, yet with an answering gleam of ready response to the other's curiosity in the quick lift of her soft blue eyes.

Mrs. Brigham looked at her. She had not resumed rocking. She still sat up straight with a slight knit of intensity on her fair forehead, between the pretty rippling curves of her auburn hair.

"Did you—hear anything?" she asked in a low voice with a glance toward the door.

"I was just across the hall in the south parlour, and that door was open and this door ajar," replied Rebecca with a slight flush.

"Then you must have——"

"I couldn't help it."

"Everything?"

"Most of it."

"What was it?"

"The old story."

"I suppose Henry was mad, as he always was, because Edward was living on here for nothing, when he had wasted all the money father left him."

Rebecca nodded with a fearful glance at the door.

When Emma spoke again her voice was still more hushed. "I know how he felt," said she. "He had always been so prudent himself, and worked hard at his profession, and there Edward had never done anything but spend, and it must have looked to him as if Edward was living at his expense, but he wasn't."

"No, he wasn't."

"It was the way father left the property—that all the children should have a home here—and he left money enough to buy the food and all if we had all come home."

"Yes."

"And Edward had a right here according to the terms of father's will, and Henry ought to have remembered it."

"Yes, he ought."

"Did he say hard things?"

"Pretty hard from what I heard."

"What?"

"I heard him tell Edward that he had no business here at all, and he thought he had better go away."

"What did Edward say?"

"That he would stay here as long as he lived and afterward, too, if he was a mind to, and he would like to see Henry get him out; and then——"

"What?"

"Then he laughed."

"What did Henry say?"

"I didn't hear him say anything, but——"

"But what?"

"I saw him when he came out of this room."

"He looked mad?"

"You've seen him when he looked so."

Emma nodded; the expression of horror on her face had deepened.

"Do you remember that time he killed the cat because she had scratched him?"

"Yes. Don't!"

Then Caroline reëntered the room. She went up to the stove in which a wood fire was burning—it was a cold, gloomy day of fall—and she warmed her hands, which were reddened from recent washing in cold water.

Mrs. Brigham looked at her and hesitated. She glanced at the door, which was still ajar, as it did not easily shut, being still swollen with the damp weather of the summer. She rose and pushed it together with a sharp thud, which jarred the house. Rebecca started painfully with a half exclamation.

Caroline looked at her disapprovingly.

"It is time you controlled your nerves, Rebecca," said she.

"I can't help it," replied Rebecca with almost a wail. "I am nervous. There's enough to make me so, the Lord knows."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Caroline with her old air of sharp suspicion, and something between challenge and dread of its being met.

Rebecca shrank.

"Nothing," said she.

"Then I wouldn't keep speaking in such a fashion."

Emma, returning from the closed door, said imperiously that it ought to be fixed, it shut so hard.

"It will shrink enough after we have had the fire a few days," replied Caroline. "If anything is done to it it will be too small; there will be a crack at the sill."

"I think Henry ought to be ashamed of himself for talking as he did to Edward," said Mrs. Brigham abruptly, but in an almost inaudible voice.

"Hush!" said Caroline, with a glance of actual fear at the closed door.

"Nobody can hear with the door shut."

"He must have heard it shut, and——"

"Well, I can say what I want to before he comes down, and I am not afraid of him."

"I don't know who is afraid of him! What reason is there for anybody to be afraid of Henry?" demanded Caroline.

Mrs. Brigham trembled before her sister's look. Rebecca gasped again. "There isn't any reason, of course. Why should there be?"

"I wouldn't speak so, then. Somebody might overhear you and think it was queer. Miranda Joy is in the south parlour sewing, you know."

"I thought she went upstairs to stitch on the machine."

"She did, but she has come down again."

"Well, she can't hear."

"I say again, I think Henry ought to be ashamed of himself. I shouldn't think he'd ever get over it, having words with poor Edward the very night before he died. Edward was enough sight better disposition than Henry, with all his faults. I always thought a great deal of poor Edward, myself."

Mrs. Brigham passed a large fluff of handkerchief across her eyes; Rebecca sobbed outright.

"Rebecca," said Caroline admonishingly, keeping her mouth stiff and swallowing determinately.

"I never heard him speak a cross word, unless he spoke cross to Henry that last night. I don't know but he did, from what Rebecca overheard," said Emma.

"Not so much cross as sort of soft, and sweet, and aggravating," sniffled Rebecca.

"He never raised his voice," said Caroline; "but he had his way."

"He had a right to in this case."

"Yes, he did."

"He had as much of a right here as Henry," sobbed Rebecca, "and now he's gone, and he will never be in this home that poor father left him and the rest of us again."

"What do you really think ailed Edward?" asked Emma in hardly more than a whisper. She did not look at her sister.

Caroline sat down in a nearby armchair, and clutched the arms convulsively until her thin knuckles whitened.

"I told you," said she.

Rebecca held her handkerchief over her mouth, and looked at them above it with terrified, streaming eyes.

"I know you said that he had terrible pains in his stomach, and had spasms, but what do you think made him have them?"

"Henry called it gastric trouble. You know Edward has always had dyspepsia."

Mrs. Brigham hesitated a moment. "Was there any talk of an—examination?" said she.

Then Caroline turned on her fiercely.

"No," said she in a terrible voice. "No."

The three sisters' souls seemed to meet on one common ground of terrified understanding through their eyes. The old-fashioned latch of the door was heard to rattle, and a push from without made the door shake ineffectually. "It's Henry," Rebecca sighed rather than whispered. Mrs. Brigham settled herself after a noiseless rush across the floor into her rocking-chair again, and was swaying back and forth with her head comfortably leaning back, when the door at last yielded and Henry Glynn entered. He cast a covertly sharp, comprehensive glance at Mrs. Brigham with her elaborate calm; at Rebecca quietly huddled in the corner of the sofa with her handkerchief to her face and only one small reddened ear as attentive as a dog's uncovered and revealing her alertness for his presence; at Caroline sitting with a strained composure in her armchair by the stove. She met his eyes quite firmly with a look of inscrutable fear, and defiance of the fear and of him.

Henry Glynn looked more like this sister than the others. Both had the same hard delicacy of form and feature, both were tall and almost emaciated, both had a sparse growth of gray blond hair far back from high intellectual foreheads, both had an almost noble aquilinity of feature. They confronted each other with the pitiless immovability of two

statues in whose marble lineaments emotions were fixed for all eternity.

Then Henry Glynn smiled and the smile transformed his face. He looked suddenly years younger, and an almost boyish recklessness and irresolution appeared in his face. He flung himself into a chair with a gesture which was bewildering from its incongruity with his general appearance. He leaned his head back, flung one leg over the other, and looked laughingly at Mrs. Brigham.

"I declare, Emma, you grow younger every year," he said.

She flushed a little, and her placid mouth widened at the corners. She was susceptible to praise.

"Our thoughts to-day ought to belong to the one of us who will *never* grow older," said Caroline in a hard voice.

Henry looked at her, still smiling. "Of course, we none of us forget that," said he, in a deep, gentle voice, "but we have to speak to the living, Caroline, and I have not seen Emma for a long time, and the living are as dear as the dead."

"Not to me," said Caroline.

She rose, and went abruptly out of the room again. Rebecca also rose and hurried after her, sobbing loudly.

Henry looked slowly after them.

"Caroline is completely unstrung," said he.

Mrs. Brigham rocked. A confidence in him inspired by his manner was stealing over her. Out of that confidence she spoke quite easily and naturally.

"His death was very sudden," said she.

Henry's eyelids quivered slightly but his gaze was unswerving.

"Yes," said he; "it was very sudden. He was sick only a few hours."

"What did you call it?"

"Gastric."

"You did not think of an examination?"

"There was no need. I am perfectly certain as to the cause of his death."

Suddenly Mrs. Brigham felt a creep as of some live horror over her very soul. Her flesh prickled with cold, before an inflection of his voice. She rose, tottering on weak knees.

"Where are you going?" asked Henry in a strange, breathless voice.

Mrs. Brigham said something incoherent about some sewing which she had to do, some black for the funeral, and was out of the room. She went up to the front chamber which she occupied. Caroline was there. She went close to her and took her hands, and the two sisters looked at each other.

"Don't speak, don't, I won't have it!" said Caroline finally in an awful whisper.

"I won't," replied Emma.

That afternoon the three sisters were in the study, the large front room on the ground floor across the hall from the south parlour, when the dusk deepened.

Mrs. Brigham was hemming some black material. She sat close to the west window for the waning light. At last she laid her work on her lap.

"It's no use, I cannot see to sew another stitch until we have a light," said she.

Caroline, who was writing some letters at the table, turned to Rebecca, in her usual place on the sofa.

"Rebecca, you had better get a lamp," she said.

Rebecca started up; even in the dusk her face showed her agitation.

"It doesn't seem to me that we need a lamp quite yet," she said in a piteous, pleading voice like a child's.

"Yes, we do," returned Mrs. Brigham peremptorily. "We must have a light. I must finish this to-night or I can't go to the funeral, and I can't see to sew another stitch."

"Caroline can see to write letters, and she is farther from the window than you are," said Rebecca.

"Are you trying to save kerosene or are you lazy, Rebecca Glynn?" cried Mrs. Brigham. "I can go and get the light myself, but I have this work all in my lap."

Caroline's pen stopped scratching.

"Rebecca, we must have the light," said she.

"Had we better have it in here?" asked Rebecca weakly.

"Of course! Why not?" cried Caroline sternly.

"I am sure I don't want to take my sewing into the other

room, when it is all cleaned up for to-morrow," said Mrs. Brigham.

"Why, I never heard such a to-do about lighting a lamp."

Rebecca rose and left the room. Presently she entered with a lamp—a large one with a white porcelain shade. She set it on a table, an old-fashioned card-table which was placed against the opposite wall from the window. That wall was clear of bookcases and books, which were only on three sides of the room. That opposite wall was taken up with three doors, the one small space being occupied by the table. Above the table on the old-fashioned paper, of a white satin gloss, traversed by an indeterminate green scroll, hung quite high a small gilt and black-framed ivory miniature taken in her girlhood of the mother of the family. When the lamp was set on the table beneath it, the tiny pretty face painted on the ivory seemed to gleam out with a look of intelligence.

"What have you put that lamp over there for?" asked Mrs. Brigham, with more of impatience than her voice usually revealed. "Why didn't you set it in the hall and have done with it? Neither Caroline nor I can see if it is on that table."

"I thought perhaps you would move," replied Rebecca hoarsely.

"If I do move, we can't both sit at that table. Caroline has her paper all spread around. Why don't you set the lamp on the study table in the middle of the room, then we can both see?"

Rebecca hesitated. Her face was very pale. She looked with an appeal that was fairly agonizing at her sister Caroline.

"Why don't you put the lamp on this table, as she says?" asked Caroline, almost fiercely. "Why do you act so, Rebecca?"

"I should think you *would* ask her that," said Mrs. Brigham. "She doesn't act like herself at all."

Rebecca took the lamp and set it on the table in the middle of the room without another word. Then she turned her back upon it quickly and seated herself on the sofa, and

placed a hand over her eyes as if to shade them, and remained so.

"Does the light hurt your eyes, and is that the reason why you didn't want the lamp?" asked Mrs. Brigham kindly.

"I always like to sit in the dark," replied Rebecca chokingly.

Then she snatched her handkerchief hastily from her pocket and began to weep. Caroline continued to write, Mrs. Brigham to sew.

Suddenly Mrs. Brigham as she sewed glanced at the opposite wall. The glance became a steady stare. She looked intently, her work suspended in her hands. Then she looked away again and took a few more stitches, then she looked again, and again turned to her task. At last she laid her work in her lap and stared concentratedly. She looked from the wall around the room, taking note of the various objects; she looked at the wall long and intently. Then she turned to her sisters.

"What *is* that?" said she.

"What?" asked Caroline harshly; her pen scratched loudly across the paper.

Rebecca gave one of her convulsive gasps.

"That strange shadow on the wall," replied Mrs. Brigham.

Rebecca sat with her face hidden: Caroline dipped her pen in the inkstand.

"Why don't you turn around and look?" asked Mrs. Brigham in a wondering and somewhat aggrieved way.

"I am in a hurry to finish this letter, if Mrs. Wilson Ebbit is going to get word in time to come to the funeral," replied Caroline shortly.

Mrs. Brigham rose, her work slipping to the floor, and she began walking around the room, moving various articles of furniture, with her eyes on the shadow.

Then suddenly she shrieked out:

"Look at this awful shadow! What is it? Caroline, look, look! Rebecca, look! *What is it?*"

All Mrs. Brigham's triumphant placidity was gone. Her handsome face was livid with horror. She stood stiffly pointing at the shadow.

"Look!" said she, pointing her finger at it. "Look! What is it?"

Then Rebecca burst out in a wild wail after a shuddering glance at the wall:

"Oh, Caroline, there it is again! There it is again!"

"Caroline Glynn, you look!" said Mrs. Brigham. "Look! What is that dreadful shadow?"

Caroline rose, turned, and stood confronting the wall.

"How should I know?" she said.

"It has been there every night since he died," cried Rebecca.—"Every night?"

"Yes. He died Thursday and this is Saturday; that makes three nights," said Caroline rigidly. She stood as if holding herself calm with a vise of concentrated will.

"It—it looks like—like——" stammered Mrs. Brigham in a tone of intense horror.—"I know what it looks like well enough," said Caroline. "I've got eyes in my head."

"It looks like Edward," burst out Rebecca in a sort of frenzy of fear. "Only——"

"Yes, it does," assented Mrs. Brigham, whose horror-stricken tone matched her sister's, "only—— Oh, it is awful! What is it, Caroline?"

"I ask you again, how should I know?" replied Caroline. "I see it there like you. How should I know any more than you?"—"It *must* be something in the room," said Mrs. Brigham, staring wildly around.

"We moved everything in the room the first night it came," said Rebecca; "it is not anything in the room."

Caroline turned upon her with a sort of fury. "Of course it is something in the room," said she. "How you act! What do you mean by talking so? Of course it is something in the room."

"Of course, it is," agreed Mrs. Brigham, looking at Caroline suspiciously. "Of course it must be. It is only a coincidence. It just happens so. Perhaps it is that fold of the window curtain that makes it. It must be something in the room."

"It is not anything in the room," repeated Rebecca with obstinate horror.

The door opened suddenly and Henry Glynn entered

He began to speak, then his eyes followed the direction of the others'. He stood stock still staring at the shadow on the wall. It was life size and stretched across the white parallelogram of a door, half across the wall space on which the picture hung.

"What is that?" he demanded in a strange voice.

"It must be due to something in the room," Mrs. Brigham said faintly.

"It is not due to anything in the room," said Rebecca again with the shrill insistency of terror.

"How you act, Rebecca Glynn," said Caroline.

Henry Glynn stood and stared a moment longer. His face showed a gamut of emotions—horror, conviction, then furious incredulity. Suddenly he began hastening hither and thither about the room. He moved the furniture with fierce jerks, turning ever to see the effect upon the shadow on the wall. Not a line of its terrible outlines wavered.

"It must be something in the room!" he declared in a voice which seemed to snap like a lash.

His face changed. The inmost secrecy of his nature seemed evident until one almost lost sight of his lineaments. Rebecca stood close to her sofa, regarding him with woeful, fascinated eyes. Mrs. Brigham clutched Caroline's hand. They both stood in a corner out of his way. For a few moments he raged about the room like a caged wild animal. He moved every piece of furniture! when the moving of a piece did not affect the shadow, he flung it to the floor, the sisters watching.

Then suddenly he desisted. He laughed and began straightening the furniture which he had flung down.

"What an absurdity," he said easily. "Such a to-do about a shadow."

"That's so," assented Mrs. Brigham, in a scared voice which she tried to make natural. As she spoke she lifted a chair near her.

"I think you have broken the chair that Edward was so fond of," said Caroline.

Terror and wrath were struggling for expression on her face. Her mouth was set, her eyes shrinking. Henry lifted the chair with a show of anxiety.

"Just as good as ever," he said pleasantly. He laughed again, looking at his sisters. "Did I scare you?" he said. "I should think you might be used to me by this time. You know my way of wanting to leap to the bottom of a mystery, and that shadow does look—queer, like—and I thought if there was any way of accounting for it I would like to without any delay."—"You don't seem to have succeeded," remarked Caroline dryly, with a slight glance at the wall.

Henry's eyes followed hers and he quivered perceptibly.

"Oh, there is no accounting for shadows," he said, and he laughed again. "A man is a fool to try to account for shadows."

Then the supper bell rang, and they all left the room, but Henry kept his back to the wall, as did, indeed, the others.

Mrs. Brigham pressed close to Caroline as she crossed the hall. "He looked like a demon!" she breathed in her ear.

Henry led the way with an alert motion like a boy; Rebecca brought up the rear; she could scarcely walk, her knees trembled so.

"I can't sit in that room again this evening," she whispered to Caroline after supper.

"Very well, we will sit in the south room," replied Caroline. "I think we will sit in the south parlour," she said aloud; "it isn't as damp as the study, and I have a cold."

So they all sat in the south room with their sewing. Henry read the newspaper, his chair drawn close to the lamp on the table. About nine o'clock he rose abruptly and crossed the hall to the study. The three sisters looked at one another. Mrs. Brigham rose, folded her rustling skirts compactly around her, and began tiptoeing toward the door.

"What are you going to do?" inquired Rebecca agitatedly.—"I am going to see what he is about," replied Mrs. Brigham cautiously.

She pointed as she spoke to the study door across the hall; it was ajar. Henry had striven to pull it together behind him, but it had somehow swollen beyond the limit with curious speed. It was still ajar and a streak of light showed from top to bottom. The hall lamp was not lit.

"You had better stay where you are," said Caroline with guarded sharpness.

"I am going to see," repeated Mrs. Brigham firmly.

Then she folded her skirts so tightly that her bulk with its swelling curves was revealed in a black silk sheath, and she went with a slow toddle across the hall to the study door. She stood there, her eye at the crack.

In the south room Rebecca stopped sewing and sat watching with dilated eyes. Caroline sewed steadily. What Mrs. Brigham, standing at the crack in the study door, saw was this:

Henry Glynn, evidently reasoning that the source of the strange shadow must be between the table on which the lamp stood and the wall, was making systematic passes and thrusts all over and through the intervening space with an old sword which had belonged to his father. Not an inch was left unpierced. He seemed to have divided the space into mathematical sections. He brandished the sword with a sort of cold fury and calculation; the blade gave out flashes of light, the shadow remained unmoved. Mrs. Brigham, watching, felt herself cold with horror.

Finally Henry ceased and stood with the sword in hand and raised as if to strike, surveying the shadow on the wall threateningly. Mrs. Brigham toddled back across the hall and shut the south room door behind her before she related what she had seen.

"He looked like a demon!" she said again. "Have you got any of that old wine in the house, Caroline? I don't feel as if I could stand much more."

Indeed, she looked overcome. Her handsome placid face was worn and strained and pale.

"Yes, there's plenty," said Caroline; "you can have some when you go to bed."

"I think we had all better take some," said Mrs. Brigham. "Oh, my God, Caroline, what——"

"Don't ask and don't speak," said Caroline.

"No, I am not going to," replied Mrs. Brigham; "but——"

Rebecca moaned aloud.

"What are you doing that for?" asked Caroline harshly.

"Poor Edward," returned Rebecca.

"That is all you have to groan for," said Caroline "There is nothing else."

"I am going to bed," said Mrs. Brigham. "I sha'n't be able to be at the funeral if I don't."

Soon the three sisters went to their chambers and the south parlour was deserted. Caroline called to Henry in the study to put out the light before he came upstairs. They had been gone about an hour when he came into the room bringing the lamp which had stood in the study. He set it on the table and waited a few minutes, pacing up and down. His face was terrible, his fair complexion showed livid; his blue eyes seemed dark blanks of awful reflections.

Then he took the lamp up and returned to the library. He set the lamp on the centre table, and the shadow sprang out on the wall. Again he studied the furniture and moved it about, but deliberately, with none of his former frenzy. Nothing affected the shadow. Then he returned to the south room with the lamp and again waited. Again he returned to the study and placed the lamp on the table, and the shadow sprang out upon the wall. It was midnight before he went upstairs. Mrs. Brigham and the other sisters, who could not sleep, heard him.

The next day was the funeral. That evening the family sat in the south room. Some relatives were with them. Nobody entered the study until Henry carried a lamp in there after the others had retired for the night. He saw again the shadow on the wall leap to an awful life before the light.

The next morning at breakfast Henry Glynn announced that he had to go to the city for three days. The sisters looked at him with surprise. He very seldom left home, and just now his practice had been neglected on account of Edward's death. He was a physician.

"How can you leave your patients now?" asked Mrs. Brigham wonderingly.

"I don't know how to, but there is no other way," replied Henry easily. "I have had a telegram from Doctor Mitford."

"Consultation?" inquired Mrs. Brigham.

"I have business," replied Henry.

Doctor Mitford was an old classmate of his who lived in a neighbouring city and who occasionally called upon him in the case of a consultation.

After he had gone Mrs. Brigham said to Caroline that

after all Henry had not said that he was going to consult with Doctor Mitford, and she thought it very strange.

"Everything is very strange," said Rebecca with a shudder.

"What do you mean?" inquired Caroline sharply.

"Nothing," replied Rebecca.

Nobody entered the library that day, nor the next, nor the next. The third day Henry was expected home, but he did not arrive and the last train from the city had come.

"I call it pretty queer work," said Mrs. Brigham. "The idea of a doctor leaving his patients for three days anyhow, at such a time as this, and I know he has some very sick ones; he said so. And the idea of a consultation lasting three days! There is no sense in it, and *now* he has not come. I don't understand it, for my part."

"I don't either," said Rebecca.

They were all in the south parlour. There was no light in the study opposite, and the door was ajar.

Presently Mrs. Brigham rose—she could not have told why; something seemed to impel her, some will outside her own. She went out of the room, again wrapping her rustling skirts around that she might pass noiselessly, and began pushing at the swollen door of the study.

"She has not got any lamp," said Rebecca in a shaking voice.

Caroline, who was writing letters, rose again, took a lamp (there were two in the room) and followed her sister. Rebecca had risen, but she stood trembling, not venturing to follow. The doorbell rang, but the others did not hear it; it was on the south door on the other side of the house from the study. Rebecca, after hesitating until the bell rang the second time, went to the door; she remembered that the servant was out.

Caroline and her sister Emma entered the study. Caroline set the lamp on the table. They looked at the wall. "Oh, my God," gasped Mrs. Brigham, "there are—there are two—shadows." The sisters stood clutching each other, staring at the awful things on the wall. Then Rebecca came in, staggering, with a telegram in her hand. "Here is—a telegram," she gasped. "Henry is—dead."

MAJOR PERDUE'S BARGAIN

BY JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

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WHEN next I had an opportunity to talk with Aunt Minervy Ann, she indulged in a hearty laugh before saying a word, and it was some time before she found her voice.

"What is so funny to-day?" I inquired.

"Me, suh—nothin' tall 'bout me, an' 'tain't only ter day, nudder. Hit's eve'y day sence I been big 'nuff fer to see myse'f in de spring branch. I laughed den, an' I laugh now eve'y time I see myse'f in my min'—ef I' got any min'. I wuz talkin' ter Hamp las' night an' tellin' 'im how I start in ter tell you sump'n 'bout Marse Paul Conant' shoulder, an' den eend up by tellin' you eve'ything else I know but dat.

"Hamp 'low, he did, 'Dat ain't nothin', bekaze when I ax you ter marry me, you start in an' tell me 'bout a nigger gal 'cross dar in Jasper County, which she make promise fer ter marry a man an' she crossed her heart; an' den when de time come she stood up an' marry 'im an' fin' out 'tain't de same man, but somebody what she ain't never see' befo'.'

"I 'speck dat's so, suh, bekaze dey wuz sump'n like dat happen in Jasper County. You know de Waters fambly—dey kep' race-hosses. Well, suh, 'twuz right on der plantation. Warren Waters tol' me 'bout dat hisse'f. He wuz de hoss-trainer, an' he 'uz right dar on de groun'. When de gal done married, she look up an' holler, 'You ain't my husban', bekaze I ain't make no promise fer ter marry you.' De man he laugh, an' say, 'Don't need no promise atter you done married.'

"Well, suh, dey say dat gal wuz skeer'd—skeer'd fer true. She sot an' look in der fire. De man sot an' look at 'er. She try ter slip out de do', an' he slipped wid 'er. She walkt to'rds de big house, an' he walkt wid 'er. She come back, an' he come wid 'er. She run an' he run wid 'er. She cry

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an' he laugh at 'er. She dunner what to do. Bimeby she tuck a notion dat de man mought be de Ol' Boy hisse'f, an' she drapped down on her knees an' 'gun ter pray. Dis make de man restless; look like he frettin'. Den he 'gun ter shake like he havin' chill. Den he slip down out'n de cheer. Down he went on his all-fours. Den his cloze drapped off, an' bless gracious! dar he wuz, a great big black shaggy dog wid a short chain roun' his neck. Some un um flung a chunk of fire at 'im, an' he run out howlin'.

"Dat wuz de last dey seed un 'im, suh. Dey flung his cloze in de fire, an' dey make a blaze dat come plum out'n de top er de chimbley stack. Dat what make me tell Hamp 'bout it, suh. He ax me fer ter marry 'im, an' I wan't so mighty sho' dat he wan't de Ol' Boy."

"Well, that is queer, if true," said I, "but how about Mr. Conant's crippled shoulder?"

"Oh, it's de trufe, suh. Warren Waters tol' me dat out'n his own mouf, an' he wuz right dar. I dunno but what de gal wuz some er his kinnery. I don't min' tellin' you dat 'bout Marse Paul, suh, but you mustn't let on 'bout it, bekaze Marse Tumlin an' Miss Vallie des' ez tetchous 'bout dat ez dey kin be. I'd never git der fergivunce ef dey know'd I was settin' down here tellin' 'bout dat.

"You know how 'twaz in dem days. De folks what wuz de richest wuz de wussest off when de army come home from battlin'. I done tol' you 'bout Marse Tumlin. He ain't had nothin' in de roun' worl' but a whole passel er lan', an' me an' Miss Vallie. I don't count Hamp, bekaze Hamp 'fuse ter b'lieve he's free twel he ramble 'roun' an' fin' out de patterollers ain't gwine ter take 'im up. Dat how come I had ter sell ginger-cakes an' chicken-pies dat time. De money I made at dat ain't last long, bekaze Marse Tumlin he been use' ter rich vittles, an' he went right downtown an' got a bottle er chow-chow, an' some olives, an' some sardines, an' some cheese, an' you know yo'se'f, suh, dat money ain't gwine ter las' when you buy dat kin' er doin's.

"Well, suh, we done mighty well whiles de money helt out, but 'tain't court-week all de time, an' when dat de case, money got ter come fum some'rs else 'sides sellin' cakes an' pies. Bimeby, Hamp he got work at de liberty stable, whar

dey hire out hosses an' board um. I call it a hoss tavern, suh, but Hamp, he 'low it's a liberty stable. Anyhow, he got work dar, an' dat sorter he'p out. Sometimes he'd growl bekaze I tuck his money fer ter he'p out my white folks, but when he got right mad I'd gi' Miss Vallie de wink, an' she'd say: 'Hampton, how'd you like ter have a little dram ter-night? You look like youer tired.' I could a-hugged 'er fer de way she done it, she 'uz dat cute. An' den Hamp, he'd grin an' 'low, 'I ain't honin' fer it, Miss Vallie, but 'twon't do me no harm, an' it may do me good.'

"An' den, suh, he'd set down, an' atter he got sorter warmed up wid de dram, he'd kinder roll his eye and 'low, 'Miss Vallie, she is a fine white 'oman!' Well, suh, 'tain't long 'fo' we had dat nigger man trained—done trained, bless you' soul! One day Miss Vallie had ter go 'cross town, an' she went by de liberty stable whar Hamp wuz at, leastways, he seed 'er some'rs; an' he come home dat night lookin' like he wuz feelin' bad. He 'fuse ter talk. Bimeby, atter he had his supper, he say, 'I seed Miss Vallie downtown ter-day. She wuz wid Miss Irene, an' dat 'ar frock she had on look mighty shabby.' I 'low, 'Well, it de bes' she got. She ain't got money like de Chippendales, an' Miss Irene don't keer how folks' cloze look. She too much quality fer dat.' Hamp say, 'Whyn't you take some er yo' money an' make Miss Vallie git er nice frock?' I 'low, 'Whar I got any money?' Hamp he hit his pocket an' say, 'You got it right here.'

"An' sho' 'nuff, suh, dat nigger man had a roll er money —mos' twenty dollars. Some hoss drovers had come 'long an' Hamp made dat money by trimmin' up de ol' mules dey had an' makin' um look young. He's got de art er dat, suh, an' dey paid 'im well. Dar wuz de money, but how wuz I gwine ter git it in Miss Vallie's han'? I kin buy vittles an' she not know whar dey come fum, but when it come ter buyin' frocks—well, suh, hit stumped me. Dey wan't but one way ter do it, an' I done it. I make like I wuz mad. I tuck de money an' went in de house dar whar Miss Vallie wuz sewin' an' mendin'. I went stompin' in, I did, an' when I got in I started my tune.

"I 'low, 'Ef de Perdues gwine ter go scandalizin' deyse'f

by trottin' down town in broad daylight wid all kinder frocks on der back, I'm gwine 'way fum here; an' I dun'ner but what I'll go anyhow. 'Tain't bekaze dey's any lack er money, fer here de money right here.' Wid dat I slammed it down on de table. 'Dar! take dat an' git you a frock dat'll make you look like sump'n when you git outside er dis house. An' whiles you er gittin', git sump'n fer ter put on yo' head!'"

Whether it was by reason of a certain dramatic faculty inherent in her race that she was able to summon emotions at will, or whether it was mere unconscious reproduction, I am not prepared to say. But certain it is that, in voice and gesture, in tone and attitude, and in a certain passionate earnestness of expression, Aunt Minervy Ann built up the whole scene before my eyes with such power that I seemed to have been present when it occurred. I felt as if she had conveyed me bodily into the room to become a witness of the episode. She went on, still with a frown on her face and a certain violence of tone and manner:

"I whipped 'roun' de room a time er two, pickin' up de cheers an' slammin' um down ag'in, an' knockin' things 'roun' like I wuz mad. Miss Vallie put her sewin' down an' lay her han' on de money. She 'low, 'What's dis, Aunt Minervy Ann?' I say, 'Hit's money, dat what 'tis—nothin' but nasty, stinkin' money! I wish dey wan't none in de worl' less'n I had a bairlful.' She sorter fumble at de money wid 'er fingers. You dunno, suh, how white an' purty an' weak her han' look ter me dat night. She 'low, 'Aunt Minervy Ann, I can't take dis.' I blaze' out at 'er. 'You don't haf'ter take it; you done got it! An' ef you don't keep it, I'll rake up eve'y rag an' scrap I got an' leave dis place. Now, you des' try me!'"

Again Aunt Minervy Ann summoned to her aid the passion of a moment that had passed away, and again I had the queer experience of seeming to witness the whole scene. She continued:

"Wid dat, I whipt out er de room an' out er de house an' went an' sot down out dar in my house whar Hamp was at. Hamp, he 'low, 'What she say?' I, say, 'She ain't had time ter say nothin'—I come 'way fum dar.' He 'low,

MARY E. WILKINS
FREEMAN

'You ain't brung dat money back, is you?' I say: 'Does you think I'm a start naked fool?' He 'low: 'Kaze ef you is, I'll put it right spang in de fire here.'

"Well, suh, I sot dar some little time, but eve'ything wuz so still in de house, bein's Marse Tumlin done gone downtown, dat I crope back an' crope in fer ter see what Miss Vallie doin'. Well, suh, she wuz cryin'—settin' dar cryin'. I 'low, 'Honey, is I say anything fer ter hurt yo' feelin's?' She blubber' out, 'You know you ain't!' an' den she cry good-fashion.

"Des 'bout dat time, who should come in but Marse Tumlin. He look at Miss Vallie an' den he look at me. He say, 'Valentine, what de matter?' I say, 'It's me! I'm de one! I made 'er cry. I done sump'n ter hurt 'er feelin's.' She 'low, ''Tain't so, an' you know it. I'm des cryin' bekaze you too good ter me.'

"Well, suh, I had ter git out er dar fer ter keep fum chokin'. Marse Tumlin foller me out, an' right here on de porch, he 'low, 'Minervy Ann, nex' time don't be so dam good to 'er.' I wuz doin' some snifflin' myse'f 'bout dat time, an' I ain't keerin' what I say, so I stop an' flung back at 'im, *'I'll be des es dam good ter 'er ez I please—I'm free!'* Well, suh, stidder hittin' me, Marse Tumlin bust out laughin', an' long atter dat he'd laugh eve'y time he look at me, des like sump'n wuz ticklin' 'im mighty nigh ter death.

"I 'speck he must er tol' 'bout dat cussin' part, bekaze folks 'roun' here done got de idee dat I'm a sassy an' bad-tempered 'oman. Ef I had ter work fer my livin', suh, I boun' you I'd be a long time findin' a place. Atter dat, Hamp, he got in de Legislatur', an' it sho' wuz a money-makin' place. Den we had eve'ything we wanted, an' mo' too, but bimeby de Legislatur' gun out, an' den dar we wuz, flat ez flounders, an' de white folks don't want ter hire Hamp des kaze he been ter de Legislatur'; but he got back in de liberty stable atter so long a time. Yit 'twa'n't what you may call livin'.

"All dat time, I hear Marse Tumlin talkin' ter Miss Vallie 'bout what he call his wil' lan'. He say he got two thousan' acres down dar in de wiregrass, an' ef he kin sell

it, he be mighty glad ter do so. Well, suh, one day, long to'rds night, a two-hoss waggin driv' in at de side gate an' come in de back-yard. Ol' Ben Sadler wuz drivin', an' he 'low, 'Heyo, Minervy Ann, whar you want deze goods drapped at?' I say, 'Hello yo'se'f, ef you wanter hello. What you got dar, an' who do it 'blong ter?' He 'low, 'Hit's goods fer Major Tumlin Perdue, an' whar does you want um drapped at?' Well, suh, I ain't know what ter say, but I run'd an' ax'd Miss Vallie, an' she say put um out anywheres 'roun' dar, kaze she dunner nothin' 'bout um. So ol' Ben Sadler, he put um out, an' when I come ter look at um, dey wuz a bairl er sump'n, an' a kaig er sump'n, an' a box er sump'n. De bairl shuck like it mought be 'lasses, an' de kaig shuck like it mought be dram, an' de box hefted like it mought be terbarker. An', sho' 'nuff, dat what dey wuz—a bairl er sorghum syr'p, an' a kaig er peach brandy, an' a box er plug terbarker.

"I say right den, an' Miss Vallie 'll tell you de same, dat Marse Tumlin done gone an' swap off all his wil' lan', but Miss Vallie, she say no; he won't never think er sech a thing; but, bless yo' soul, suh, she wa'n't nothin' but a school-gal, you may say, an' she ain't know no mo' 'bout men folks dan what a weasel do. An den, right 'pon top er dat, here come a nigger boy leadin' a bob-tail hoss. When I see dat, I dez good ez know'd dat de wil' lan' done been swap off, bekaze Marse Tumlin ain't got nothin' fer ter buy all dem things wid, an' I tell you right now, suh, I wuz rank mad, kase what we want wid any ol' bob-tail hoss? De sorghum mought do, an' de dram kin be put up wid, an' de terbarker got some comfort in it, but what de name er goodness we gwine ter do wid dat ol' hoss, when we ain't got hardly 'nuff vittles fer ter feed ourse'f wid? Dat what I ax Miss Vallie, an' she say right pine-blank she dunno.

"Well, suh, it's de Lord's trufe, I wuz dat mad I dunner what I say, an' I wa'n't keerin' nudder, bekaze I know how we had ter pinch an' squeeze fer ter git 'long in dis house. But I went 'bout gittin' supper, an' bimeby, Hamp, he come, an' I told 'im 'bout de ol' bob-tail hoss, an' he went out an' look at 'im. Atter while, here he come back laughin', I say, 'You well ter laugh at dat ol' hoss.' He, 'low, 'I ain't

laughin' at de hoss. I'm laughin' at you. Gal, dat de finest hoss what ever put foot on de groun' in dis town. Dat's Marse Paul Conant's trottin' hoss. He'll fetch fi' hunder'd dollars any day. What he doin' here?' I up an' tol' 'im all I know'd, an' he shuck his head; he 'low, 'Gal, you lay low. Dey's sump'n n'er behime all dat.'

"What Hamp say sorter make me put on my studyin'-cap; but when you come ter look at it, suh, dey wa'n't nothin' 'tall fer me ter study 'bout. All I had ter do wuz ter try ter fin' out what wuz behime it, an' let it go at dat. When Marse Tumlin come home ter supper, I know'd sump'n wuz de matter wid 'im. I know'd it by his looks, suh. It's sorter wid folks like 'tis wid chillun. Ef you keer sump'n 'bout um you'll watch der motions, and ef you watch der motions dey don't hatter tell you when sump'n de matter. He come in so easy, suh, dat Miss Vallie ain't hear 'im, but I hear de do' screak, an' I know'd 'twuz him. We wuz talkin' an' gwine on at a mighty rate, an' I know'd he done stop ter lis'n.

"Miss Vallie, she 'low she 'speck somebody made 'im a present er dem ar things. I say, 'Uh-uh, honey! don't you fool yo'se'f. Nobody ain't gwine ter do dat. Our folks ain't no mo' like dey useter wuz, dan crabapples is like plums. Dey done come ter dat pass dat whatsomever dey gits der han's on dey 'fuse ter turn it loose. All un um, 'cep' Marse Tumlin Perdue. Dey ain't no tellin' what he gun fer all dat trash. *Trash!* Hit's wuss'n trash! I wish you'd go out dar an' look at dat ol' bob-tail hoss. Why dat ol' hoss wuz stove up long 'fo' de war. By rights he ought ter be in de bone-yard dis ve'y minnit. He won't be here two whole days 'fo' you'll see de buzzards lined up out dar on de back fence waitin', an' dey won't hatter wait long nudder. Ef dey sen' any corn here fer ter feed dat bag er bones wid, I'll parch it an' eat it myse'f 'fo' he shill have it. Ef anybody 'speck I'm gwine ter 'ten' ter dat ol' frame, deyer 'speckin' wid de wrong specks. I tell you dat right now.'

"All dis time Marse Tumlin wuz stan'in' out in de hall lis'nin'. Miss Vallie talk mighty sweet 'bout it. She say, 'Ef dey ain't nobody else ter 'ten' de hoss, reckin I kin do

it.' I 'low, 'My life er me, honey! de nex' news you know you'll be hirin' out ter de liberty stable.'

"Well, suh, my talk 'gun ter git so hot dat Marse Tumlin des had ter make a fuss. He fumbled wid de do' knob, an' den come walkin' down de hall, an' by dat time I wuz in de dinin'-room. I walk mighty light, bekaze ef he say anything I want ter hear it. You can't call it eave-drappin', suh; hit look ter me dat 'twuz ez much my business ez 'twuz dern, an' I ain't never got dat idee out'n my head down ter dis day.

"But Marse Tumlin ain't say nothin', 'cep' fer ter ax Miss Vallie ef she feelin' well, an' how eve'ything wuz, but de minnit I hear 'im open his mouf I know'd he had trouble on his min'. I can't tell you how I know'd it, suh, but dar 'twuz. Look like he tried to hide it, bekaze he tol' a whole lot of funny tales 'bout folks, an' 'twa'n't long befo' he had Miss Vallie laughin' fit ter kill. But he ain't fool me, suh.

"Bimeby, Miss Vallie, she come in de dinin'-room fer ter look atter settin' de table, bekaze fum a little gal she allers like ter have de dishes fix des so. She wuz sorter hummin' a chune, like she ain't want ter talk, but I ain't let dat stan' in my way.

"I 'low, 'I wish eve'ybody wuz like dat Mr. Paul Conant. I bet you right now he been downtown dar all day makin' money han' over fist, des ez fast ez he can rake it in. I know it, kaze I does his washin' and cleans up his room fer 'im.'

"Miss Vallie say, 'Well, what uv it? Money don't make 'im no better'n anybody else.' I 'low, 'Hit don't make 'im no wuss; an' den, 'sides dat, he ain't gwine ter let nobody swindle 'im.'

"By dat time, I hatter go out an' fetch supper in, an' 'tain't take me no time, bekaze I wuz des' achin' fer ter hear how Marse Tumlin come by dem ar contraptions an' contrivances. An' I stayed in dar ter wait on de table, which it ain't need no waitin' on.

"Atter while, I 'low, 'Marse Tumlin, I like ter forgot ter tell you—you' things done come.' He say, 'What things, Minervy Ann?' I 'low, 'Dem ar contraptions, an' dat ar bob-tail hoss. He look mighty lean an' hongry, de hoss do, but Hamp he say dat's bekaze he's a high-bred hoss.

He say dem ar high-bred hosses won't take on no fat, no matter how much you feed um.'

"Marse Tumlin sorter drum on de table. Atter while he 'low, 'Dey done come, is dey, Minervy Ann?' I say, 'Yasser, dey er here right now. Hamp puts it down dat dat ar hoss one er de gayliest creatur's what ever make a track in dis town.'

"Well, suh, 'tain't no use ter tell you what else wuz said, kaze 'twan't much. I seed dat Marse Tumlin wan't gwine ter talk 'bout it, on account er bein' 'fear'd he'd hurt Miss Vallie's feelin's ef he tol' 'er dat he done swap off all dat wil' lan' fer dem ar things an' dat ar bob-tail hoss. Dat what he done. Yasser! I hear 'im sesso atterwards. He swap it off ter Marse Paul Conant.

"I thank my Lord it come out all right, but it come mighty nigh bein' de ruination er de fambly."

"How was that?" I inquired.

"Dat what I'm gwine ter tell you, suh. Right atter supper dat night, Marse Tumlin say he got ter go downtown fer ter see a man on some business, an' he ax me ef I won't stay in de house dar wid Miss Vallie. 'Twa'n't no trouble ter me, bekaze I'd 'a' been on de place anyhow, an' so when I got de kitchen cleaned up an' de things put away, I went back in de house whar Miss Vallie wuz at. Marse Tumlin wuz done gone.

"Miss Vallie, she sot at de table doin' some kind er rufflin', an' I sot back ag'in de wall in one er dem ar high-back cheers. What we said I'll never tell you, suh, bekaze I'm one er deze kinder folks what ain't no sooner set down an' git still dan dey goes ter noddin'. Dat's me. Set me down in a cheer, high-back er low-back, an' I'm done gone! I kin set here on de step an' keep des ez wide-'wake ez a skeer'd rabbit, but set me down in a cheer—well, suh, I'd like ter see anybody keep me 'wake when dat's de case.

"Dar I sot in dat ar high-back cheer, Miss Vallie rufflin' an' flutin' sump'n, an' tryin' ter make me talk, an' my head rollin' 'roun' like my neck done broke. Bimeby, *blam! blam!* come on de do'. We got one er dem ar jinglin' bells now, suh, but in dem times we had a knocker, an' it soun' like de roof fallin' in. I like ter jumped out'n my skin.

Miss Vallie drapped her conflutements an' 'low, 'What in de worl'! Aunt Minervy Ann, go ter de do'.'

"Well, suh, I went, but I ain't had no heart in it, bekaze I ain't know who it mought be, an' whar dey come fum, an' what dey want. But I went. 'Twuz me er Miss Vallie, an' I wan't gwine ter let dat chile go, not dat time er night, dough 'twa'n't so mighty late.

"I open de do' on de crack, I did, an' 'low, 'Who dat?' Somebody make answer, 'Is de Major in, Aunt Minervy Ann?' an' I know'd right den it wuz Marse Paul Conant. An' it come over me dat he had sump'n ter do wid sendin' er dem contraptions, mo' 'speshually dat ar bob-tail hoss. An' den, too, suh, lots quicker'n I kin tell it, hit come over me dat he been axin' me lots 'bout Miss Vallie. All come 'cross my min', suh, whiles I pullin' de do' open.

"I 'low, I did, 'No, suh; Marse Tumlin gone down town fer ter look atter some business, but he sho ter come back terreckly. Won't you come in, suh, an' wait fer 'im?' He sorter flung his head back an' laugh, saft like, an' say, 'I don't keer ef I do, Aunt Minervy Ann.'

"I 'low, 'Walk right in de parlor, suh, an' I'll make a light mos' 'fo' you kin turn 'roun'. He come in, he did, an' I lit de lamp, an' time I lit 'er she 'gun ter smoke. Well, suh, he tuck dat lamp, run de wick up an' down a time er two, an' dar she wuz, bright ez day.

"When I went back in de room whar Miss Vallie wuz at, she wuz stan'in' dar lookin' skeer'd. She say, 'Who dat?' I 'low, 'Hit's Marse Paul Conant, dat's who 'tis.' She say, 'What he want?' I 'low, 'Nothin' much; he does come a-courtin'. Better jump up an' not keep 'im waitin'.'

"Well, suh, you could 'a' knock'd 'er down wid a fedder. She stood dar wid 'er han' on 'er th'oat takin' short breffs, des like a little bird does when it flies in de winder an' dunner how ter fly out ag'in.

"Bimeby, she say, 'Aunt Minervy Ann, you ought ter be 'shame or yo'se'f! I know dat man when I see 'im, an' dat's all.' I 'low, 'Honey, you know mighty well he ain't come callin'. But he wanter see Marse Tumlin, an' dey ain't nothin' fer ter hender you fum gwine in dar an' makin' 'im feel at home whiles he waitin'.' She sorter study awhile

an' den she blush up. She say, 'I dunno whedder I ought ter.'

"Well, suh, dat settled it. I know'd by de way she look an' talk dat she don't need no mo' 'swadin'. I say, 'All right, honey, do ez you please; but it's yo' house; you er de mist'iss; an' it'll look mighty funny ef dat young man got ter set in dar by hisse'f an' look at de wall whiles he waitin' fer Marse Tumlin. I dunner what he'll say, kaze I ain't never hear 'im talk 'bout nobody; but I know mighty well he'll do a heap er thinkin'.'

"Des like I tell you, suh—she skipped 'roun' dar, an' flung on 'er Sunday frock, shuck out 'er curls, an' sorter fumble' 'roun' wid some ribbons, an' dar she wuz, lookin' des ez fine ez a fiddle, ef not finer. Den she swep' inter de parlor, an', you mayn't b'lieve it, suh, but she mighty nigh tuck de man's breff 'way. Mon, she wuz purty, an' she ain't do no mo' like deze eve'y-day gals dan nothin'. When she start 'way fum me, she wuz a gal. By de time she walk up de hall an' sweep in dat parlor, she wuz a grown 'oman. De blush what she had on at fust stayed wid 'er an' look like 't wuz er natchual color, an' her eyes shine, suh, like she had fire in um. I peeped at 'er, suh, fum behime de curtains in de settin'-room, an' I know what I'm talkin' 'bout. It's de Lord's trufe, suh, ef de men folks could tote dersc'f like de wimmen, an' do one way whiles dey feelin' annuder way, dey wouldn't be no livin' in de worl'. You take a school gal, suh, an' she kin fool de smartest man what ever trod shoe leather. He may talk wid 'er all day an' half de night, an' he never is ter fin' out what she thinkin' 'bout. Sometimes de gals fools deyse'f, suh, but dat's mighty seldom.

"I dunner what all dey say, kaze I ain't been in dar so mighty long 'fo' I wuz noddin', but I did hear Marse Paul say he des drapt in fer 'pollygize 'bout a little joke he played on Marse Tumlin. Miss Vallie ax what wuz de joke, an' he 'low dat Marse Tumlin wuz banterin' folks fer ter buy his wil' lan'; an' Marse Paul ax 'im what he take fer it, an' Marse Tumlin 'low he'll take anything what he can chaw, sop, er drink. Dem wuz de words—chaw, sop, er drink. Wid dat, Marse Paul say he'd gi' 'im a box er terbarker, a bairl er syr'p, an' a kaig er peach brandy an' th'ow in his buggy-hoss

fer good medjer. Marse Tumlin say 'done' an' dey shuck han's on it. Dat what Marse Paul tol' Miss Vallie, an' he 'low he des done it fer fun, kaze he done looked inter dat wil' lan', an' he 'low she's wuff a pile er money.

"Well, suh, 'bout dat time, I 'gun ter nod, an' de fus news I know'd Miss Vallie wuz whackin' 'way on de peanner, an' it look like ter me she wuz des tryin' 'erse'f. By dat time, dey wuz gettin' right chummy, an' so I des curl up on de flo', an' dream dat de peanner chunes wuz comin' out'n a bairl des like 'lasses.

"When I waked up, Marse Paul Conant done gone, an' Marse Tumlin ain't come, an' Miss Vallie wuz settin' dar in de parlor lookin' up at de ceilin' like she got some mighty long thoughts. Her color wuz still up. I look at 'er an' laugh, an' she made a mouf at me, an' I say ter myse'f, 'Hey! sump'n de matter here, sho,' but I say out loud, 'Marse Paul Conant sho gwine ter ax me ef you ain't had a dram.' She laugh an' say, 'What answer you gwine ter make?' I 'low, 'I'll bow an' say, "No, suh; I'm de one dat drinks all de dram fer de fambly."'

"Well, suh, dat chile sot in ter laughin', an' she laugh an' laugh twel she went inter highsterics. She wuz keyed up too high, ez you mought say, an' dat's de way she come down ag'in. Bimeby, Marse Tumlin come, an' Miss Vallie, she tol' 'm 'bout how Marse Paul done been dar; an' he sot dar, he did, an' hummed an' haw'd, an' done so funny dat, bimeby, I 'low, 'Well, folks, I'll hatter tell you good-night,' an' wid dat I went out."

At this point Aunt Minervy leaned forward, clasped her hands over her knees, and shook her head. When she took up the thread of her narrative, if it can be called such, the tone of her voice was more subdued, almost confidential, in fact.

"Nex' mornin' wuz my wash-day, suh, an' 'bout ten o'clock, when I got ready, dey want no bluin' in de house an' mighty little soap. I hunted high an' I hunted low, but no bluin' kin I fin'. An' dat make me mad, bekaze ef I hatter go down town atter de bluin', my wash-day'll be broke inter. But 'tain't no good fer ter git mad, bekaze I wuz bleeze ter go atter de bluin'. So I tighten up my head-hankcher, an' flung a cape on my shoulders an' put out.

"I 'speck you know how 'tis, suh. You can't go down town but what you'll see nigger wimmen stan'in' out in de front yards lookin' over de palin's. Dey all know'd me an' I know'd dem, an' de las' blessed one un um hatter hail me ez I go by, an' I hatter stop an' pass de time er day, kaze ef I'd 'a' whipt on by, dey'd 'a' said I wuz gwine back bofe on my church an' on my color. I dunner how long dey kep' me, but time I got ter Proctor's sto', I know'd I'd been on de way too long.

"I notice a crowd er men out dar, some settin' an' some stan'in', but I run'd in, I did, an' de young man what do de clerkin', he foller me in an' ax what I want. I say I want a dime's wuff er bluin', an' fer ter please, suh, wrop it up des ez quick ez he kin. I tuck notice dat while he wuz gittin' it out'n de box, he sorter stop like he lis'nin' an' den ag'in, whiles he had it in de scoop des ready fer ter drap it in de scales, he held his han' an' wait. Den I know'd he wuz lis'nin.'

"Dat makes me lis'n, an' den I hear Marse Tumlin talkin', an' time I hear 'im I know'd he wuz errytated. Twa'n't bekaze he wuz talkin' loud, suh, but 'twuz bekaze he wuz talkin' level. When he talk loud, he feelin' good. When he talk low, an' one word soun' same ez anudder, den somebody better git out'n his way. I lef' de counter an' step ter de do' fer ter see what de matter wuz betwix' um.

"Well, suh, dar wuz Marse Tumlin stan'in' dar close ter Tom Perryman. Marse Tumlin, 'low, 'Maybe de law done 'pinted you my gyardeen. How you know I been swindled?' Tom Perryman say, 'Bekaze I hear you say he bought yo' wil' lan' fer a little er nothin'. He'll swindle you ef you trade wid 'im, an' you done trade wid 'im.' Marse Tumlin 'low, 'Is Paul Conant ever swindle *you?*' Tom Perryman say, 'No, he ain't, an' ef he wuz ter I'd give 'im a kickin'.' Marse Tumlin 'low, 'Well, you know you is a swindler, an' nobody ain't kick you. How come dat?' Tom Perryman say, 'Ef you say I'm a swindler, you're a liar.'

"Well, suh, de man ain't no sooner say dat dan *bang!* went Marse Tumlin's pistol, an' des ez it banged Marse Paul Conant run 'twix' um, an' de ball went right spang th'oo de collar-bone an' sorter sideways th'oo de p'int er de

shoulder-blade. Marse Tumlin drapt his pistol an' cotch 'im ez he fell an' knelt down dar by 'im, an' all de time dat ar Tom Perryman wuz stan'in' right over um wid his pistol in his han'. I squall out, I did, 'Whyn't some er you white men take dat man pistol 'way fum 'im? Don't you see what he fixin' ter do?'

"I run'd at 'im, an' he sorter flung back wid his arm, an' when he done dat somebody grab 'im fum behind. All dat time Marse Tumlin wuz axin' Marse Paul Conant ef he hurt much. I hear 'im say, 'I wouldn't 'a' done it fer de worl', Conant—not fer de worl'.' Den de doctor, he come up, an' Marse Tumlin, he pester de man twel he hear 'im say, 'Don't worry, Major; dis boy'll live ter be a older man dan you ever will.' Den Marse Tumlin got his pistol an' hunt up an' down fer dat ar Tom Perryman, but he done gone. I seed 'im when he got on his hoss.

"I say to Marse Tumlin, 'Ain't you des ez well ter fetch Marse Paul Conant home whar we all kin take keer uv 'im?' He 'low, 'Dat's a *fack*. Go home an' tell yo' Miss Vallie fer ter have de big room fixed up time we git dar wid 'im.' I say, 'Humph! I'll fix it myse'f; I know'd I ain't gwine ter let Miss Vallie do it.'

"Well, suh, 'tain't no use fer ter tell yer de rest. Dar's dat ar baby in dar, an' what mo' sign does you want ter show you dat it all turned out des like one er dem ol'-time tales?"

A KENTUCKY CINDERELLA

BY F. HOPKINSON SMITH

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I WAS bending over my easel, hard at work upon a full-length portrait of a young girl in a costume of fifty years ago, when the door of my studio opened softly and Aunt Chloe came in.

"Good-mawnin', suh! I didn' think you'd come to-day, bein' a Sunday," she said, with a slight bend of her knees. "I'll jes' sweep up a lil mite; doan' ye move, I won't 'sturb ye."

Aunt Chloe had first opened my door a year before with a note from Marny, a brother brush, which began with "Here is an old Southern mammy who has seen better days; paint her if you can," and ended with, "Any way, give her a job."

The bearer of the note was indeed the ideal mammy, even to the bandanna handkerchief bound about her head, and the capacious waist and ample bosom—the lullaby resting-place for many a child, white and black. I had never seen a real one in the flesh before. I had heard about them in my earlier days. Daddy Billy, my father's body servant and my father's slave, who lived to be ninety-four, had told me of his own Aunt Mirey, who had died in the old days, but too far back for me to remember. And I had listened, when a boy, to the traditions connected with the plantations of my ancestors,—of the Keziahs and Mammy Crouches and Mammy Janes,—but I had never looked into the eyes of one of the old school until I saw Aunt Chloe, nor had I ever fully realized how quaintly courteous and gentle one of them could be until, with an old-time manner, born of a training seldom found outside of the old Southern homes, she bent forward, spread her apron with both hands, and with a little backward dip had said as she left me that first day: "Thank ye, suh! I'll come eve'y Sunday mawnin'. I'll do my best to please ye, an' I specs I kin."

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I do not often work on Sunday, but my picture had been too long delayed waiting for a faded wedding dress worn once by the original when she was a bride, and which had only been found when two of her descendants had ransacked their respective garrets.

"Mus' be mighty driv, suh," she said, "a workin' on de Sabbath day. Golly, but dat's a purty lady!" and she put down her pail. "I see it las' Sunday when I come in, but she didn't had dem ruffles 'round her neck den dat you done gib her. 'Clar' to goodness, dat chile look like she was jes' a-gwine to speak."

Aunt Chloe was leaning on her broom, her eyes scrutinizing the portrait.

"Well, if dat doan' beat de lan'. I ain't never seen none o' dem frocks since de ole times. An' dem lil low shoes wid de ribbons crossed on de ankles! She's de livin' pussonecation —she is so, for a fac'. Uhm! Uh!" (It is difficult to convey this peculiar sound of complete approval in so many letters.)

"Did you ever know anybody like her?" I asked.

The old woman straightened her back, and for a moment her eyes looked into mine. I had often tried to draw from her something of her earlier life, but she had always evaded my questions. Marny had told me that his attempts had at first been equally disappointing.

"Body as ole's me, suh, seen a plenty o' people." Then her eyes sought the canvas again.

After a moment's pause she said, as if to herself: "You's de real quality, chile, dat you is; eve'y spec an' spinch o' ye."

I tried again.

"Does it look like anybody you ever saw, Aunt Chloe?"

"It do an' it don't," she answered critically. "De feet is like hern, but de eyes ain't."

"Who?"

"Oh, Miss Nannie." And she leaned again on her broom and looked down on the floor.

I heaped up a little pile of pigments on one corner of my palette and flattened them for a high light on a fold in the satin gown.

"Who was Miss Nannie?" I asked carelessly. I was afraid the thread would break if I pulled too hard.

"One o' my chillen, honey." A peculiar softness came into her voice.

"Tell me about her. It will help me get her eyes right, so you can remember her better. They don't look human enough to me anyhow" (this last to myself). "Where did she live?"

"Where dey all live—down in de big house. She warn't Marse Henry's real chile, but she come o' de blood. She didn't hab dem kind o' shoes on her footses when I fust see her, but she wore 'em when she lef' me. Dat she did." Her voice rose suddenly and her eyes brightened. "And dem ain't nothin' to de way dey shined. I ain't never seen no satin slippers shine like dem slippers; dey was jes' ablaze!"

I worked on in silence. Marny had cautioned me not to be too curious. Some day she might open her heart and tell me wonderful stories of her earlier life, but I must not appear too anxious. She had become rather suspicious of strangers since she had moved North and lost track of her own people, Marny had said.

Aunt Chloe picked up her pail and began moving some easels into a far corner of my studio and piling the chairs in a heap. This done, she stopped again and stood behind me, looking intently at the canvas over my shoulder.

"My! My! ain't dat de ve'y image of dat frock? I kin see it now jes' as Miss Nannie come down de stairs. But you got to put dat gold chain on it 'fore it gits to be de ve'y 'spress image. I had it roun' my own neck once; I knew jes' how it looked."

I laid down my palette, and picking up a piece of chalk asked her to describe it so that I could make an outline.

"It was long an' heavy, an' it woun' roun' de neck twice an' hung down to de wais'. An' dat watch on de end of it! Well, I ain't seen none like dat one sence. I 'clar' to ye it was jes' 's teeny as one o' dem lil biscuits I used to make for 'er when she come in de kitchen—an' she was dere most o' de time. Dey didn't care nuffin for her much. Let 'er go roun' barefoot half de time, an' her hair a-flyin'. Only one good frock to her name, an' dat warn't nuffin but calico. I used to wash dat many a time for her long 'fore she was outen her bed. Allus makes my blood bile to dis day when-

ever I think of de way dey treated dat chile. But it didn't make no diff'ence what she had on—shoes or no shoes—her footses was dat lil. An' purty! Wid her big eyes an' her cheeks jes' 's fresh as dem rosewater roses dat I used to snip off for ole Sam to put on de table. Oh! I tell ye, if ye could picter her like dat dey wouldn't be nobody clear from here to glory could come nigh her."

Aunt Chloe's eyes were kindling with every word. I remembered Marny's warning and kept still. I had abandoned the sketch of the chain as an unnecessary incentive, and had begun again with my palette knife, pottering away, nodding appreciatingly, and now and then putting a question to clear up some tangled situation as to dates and localities which her rambling talk had left unsettled.

"Yes, suh, down in the blue grass country, near Lexin'ton, Kentucky, whar my ole master, Marse Henry Gordon, lived." she answered to my inquiry as to where this all happened. "I used to go eve'y year to see him after de war was over, an' kep' it up till he died. Dere warn't nobody like him den, an' dere ain't none now. He warn't never spiteful to chillen, white or black. Eve'ybody knowed dat. I was a pickaninny myse'f, an' I b'longed to him. An' he ain't never laid a lick on me, an' he wouldn't let nobody else do 't nuther, 'cept my mammy. I 'members one time when Aunt Dinah made cake dat ole Sam—he war a heap younger den—couldn't put it on de table 'ca'se dere was a piece broke out'n it. Sam he riz, an' Dinah she riz, an' after dey'd called each other all de names dey could lay dere tongues to, Miss Ann, my own fust mist'ess, come in an' she say dem chillen tuk dat cake, an' 't ain't nary one o' ye dat's 'sponsible. 'What's dis,' says Marse Henry—'chillen stealin' cake? Send 'em here to me!' When we all come in—dere was six or eight of us—he says, 'Eve'y one o' ye look me in de eye; now which one tuk it?' I kep' lookin' away,—fust on de flo' an' den out de windy. 'Look at me,' he says agin. 'You ain't lookin', Clorindy.' Den I cotched him watchin' me. 'Now you all go out,' he says, 'and de one dat's guilty kin come back agin.' Den we all went out in de yard. 'You tell him,' says one. 'No, you tell him;' an' dat's de way it went on. I knowed I was de wustest, for I opened de door o' de sideboard an' gin

it to de others. Den I thought, if I don't tell him mebbe he'll lick de whole passel on us, an' dat ain't right; but if I go tell him an' beg his 'umble pardon he might lemme go. So I crep' 'round where he was a-settin' wid his book on his knee," —Aunt Chloe was now moving stealthily behind me, her eyes fixed on her imaginary master, head down, one finger in her mouth,—"an' I say, 'Marse Henry!' An' he look up an' say, 'Who's dat?' An' I say, 'Dat's Clorindy.' An' he say, 'What you want?' 'Marse Henry, I come to tell ye I was hungry, an' I see de door open an' I shove it back an' tuk de piece o' cake, an' I thought maybe if I done tole ye you'd forgib me.'

" 'Den you is de ringleader,' he says, 'an' you tempted de other chillen?' 'Yes,' I says, 'I 'spec' so.' 'Well,' he says, lookin' down on de carpet, 'now dat you has perfessed an' beg pardon, you is good an' ready to pay 'tention to what I'm gwine to say.' De other chillen had sneaked up an' was listenin'; dey 'spected to see me git it, though dere ain't nary one of 'em ever knowed him to strike 'em a lick. Den he says: 'Dis here is a lil thing,—dis stealin' a cake; an' it's a big thing at de same time. Miss Ann has been right smart put out 'bout it, an' I'm gwine to see dat it don't happen agin. If you see a pin on de fl'or you wouldn't steal it,—you'd pick it up if you wanted it, an' it wouldn't be nuffin, 'cause somebody th'owed it away an' it was free to eve'body; but if you see a piece o' money on de fl'or, you knowed nobody didn't th'ow dat away an' if you pick it up an' don't tell, dat's somethin' else—dat's stealin', 'cause you tuk somethin' dat somebody else has paid somethin' for an' dat belongs to him. Now dis cake ain't o' much 'count, but it warn't yourn, an' you oughtn't to ha' tuk it. If you'd asked yo'r mist'ess for it she'd gin you a piece. There ain't nuffin here you chillen doan' git when ye ask for it.' I didn't say nuffin more. I jes' waited for him to do anythin' he wanted to me. Den he looks at de carpet for a long time an' he says:—

" 'I reckon you won't take no mo' cake 'thout askin' for it, Clorindy, an' you chillen kin go out an' play agin.' "

The tears were now standing in her eyes.

"Dat's what my ole master was, suh; I ain't never forgot it. If he had beat me to death he couldn't 'a' done no mo'

for me. He jes' splained to me an' I ain't never forgot since."

"Did your own mother find it out?" I asked.

The tears were gone now; her face was radiant again at my question.

"Dat she did, suh. One o' de chillen done tole on me. Mammy jes' made one grab as I run pas' de kitchen door, an' reached for a barrel stave, an' she fairly sot—me—afire!"

Aunt Chloe was now holding her sides with laughter, fresh tears streaming down her cheeks.

"But Marse Henry never knowed it. Lawd, suh, dere ain't nobody round here like him, nor never was. I kin 'member him now same as it was yesterday, wid his white hair, an' he a-settin' in his big chair. It was de las' time I ever see him. De big house was gone, an' de colored people was gone, an' he was dat po' he didn't know where de nex' mouf'ful was a-comin' from. I come out behind him so,"—Aunt Chloe made me her old master and my stool his rocking-chair,—"an' I pat him on the shoulder dis way, an' he say, 'Chloe, is dat you? How is it yo' looks so comf'ble like?' An' I say, 'It's you, Marse Henry; you done it all; yo' teachin' made me what I is, an' if you study about it you'll know it's so. An' de others ain't no wus'. Of all de colored people you owned, dere ain't nary one been hung, or been in de penitentiary, nor ain't knowed as liars. Dat's de way you fotch us up.'

"An' I love him yet, an' if he was a-livin' to-day I'd work for him an' take care of him if I went hungry myse'f. De only fool thing Marster Henry ever done was a-marryin' dat widow woman for his second wife. Miss Nannie, dat looks a lil bit like dat chile you got dere before ye"—and she pointed to the canvas—"wouldn't a been sot on an' 'bused like she was but for her. Dat woman warn't nuffin but a harf-strainer noway, if I do say it. Eve'body knowed dat. How Marse Henry Gordon come to marry her nobody don't know till dis day. She warn't none o' our people. Dey do say dat he met her up to Frankfort when he was in de Legislater, but I don't know if dat's so. But she warn't nuffin, nohow."

"Was Miss Nannie her child?" I asked, stepping back from my easel to get the better effect of my canvas.

"No suh, dat she warn't!" with emphasis. "She was Marse Henry's own sister's chile, she was. Her people—Miss Nannie's—lived up in Indiany, an' dey was jes' 's po' as watermelon rinds, and when her mother died Marse Henry sent for her to come live wid him, 'cause he said Miss Rachel—dat was dat woman's own chile by her fust husband—was lonesome. Dey was bofe about de one age,—fo'teen or fifteen years old,—but Lawd-a-massy! Miss Rachel warn't lonesome 'cept for what she couldn't git, an' she most broke her heart 'bout dat, much 's she could break it 'bout anything.

"I remember de ve'y day Miss Nannie come. I see her comin' down de road totin' a big ban'box, an' a carpet bag mos 's big 's herse'f. Den she turned in de gate. 'For' God,' I says to ole Sam, who was settin' de table for dinner, 'who's dis yere comin' in?' Den I see her stop an' set de bundles down an' catch her bref, and den she come on agin.

"'Dat's Marse Henry's niece,' he says. 'I heared de mist'ess say she was a-comin' one day dis week by de coach.'

"I see right away dat dat woman was up to one of her tricks; she didn't 'tend to let dat chile come no other way 'cept like a servant; she was dat dirt mean.

"Oh, you needn't look, suh! I ain't meanin' no onrespect, but I knowed dat woman when Marse Henry fust married her, an' she ain't never fooled me once. Fust time she come into de house she walked plumb in de kitchen, where me an' ole Sam an' ole Dinah was a-eaten our dinner, we setten at de table like we useter did, and she flung her head up in de air and she says: 'After dis when I come in I want you niggers to git up on yo' feet.' Think o' dat, will ye? Marse Henry never called nary one of us nigger since we was pickaninnies. I knowed den she warn't 'customed to nuthin'. But I tell ye she never put on dem kind o' airs when Marse Henry was about. No, suh. She was always mighty sugar-like to him when he was home, but dere ain't no conniption she warn't up to when he couldn't hear of it. She had purty nigh riz de roof when he done tell her dat Miss Nannie was a-comin' to live wid 'em, but she couldn't stand agin him, for warn't her only daughter, Miss Rachel, livin' on him, an' not only Miss Rachel, but lots mo' of her people where she come from?

"Well, suh, as soon as ole Sam said what chile it was dat was a-comin' down de road I dropped my dishcloth an' I run out to meet 'er.

" 'Is you Miss Nannie?' I says. 'Gimme dat bag,' I says, 'an' dat box.'

" 'Yes,' she says, 'dat's me, an' ain't you Aunt Chloe what I heared so much about?'

"Honey, you ain't never gwine to git de kind o' look on dat picter you's workin' on dere, suh, as sweet as dat chile's face when she said dat to me. I loved her from dat fust minute I see her, an' I loved her ever since, jes' as I loved her mother befo' her.

"When she got to de house, me a-totin' de things on behind, de mist'ess come out on de po'ch.

" 'Oh, dat's you, is it, Nannie?' she says. 'Well, Chloe'll tell ye where to go,' an' she went straight in de house agin. Never kissed her, nor touched her, nor nuffin!

"Ole Sam was bilin'. He heard her say it, an' if he was alive he'd tell ye same as me.

" 'Where's she gwine to sleep?' I says, callin' after her; 'upstairs long wid Miss Rachel?' I was gittin' hot myse'f; though I didn't say nuffin.

" 'No,' she says, flingin' up her head like a goat; 'my daughter needs all de room she's got. You kin take her downstairs an' fix up a place for her 'longside o' you an' Dinah.' She was de old cook.

" 'Come 'long,' I says, 'Miss Nannie,' an' I dropped a curtsey same's if she was a princess. An' so she was, an' Marse Henry's own eyes in her head, an' 'nough like him to be his own chile. 'I'll hab ev'ything ready for ye,' I says. 'You wait here an' take de air,' an' I got a chair an' sot her down on de po'ch, an' ole Sam brung her some cake, an' I went to git de room ready—de room offn de kitchen pantry, where dey puts de overseer's chillen when dey come to see him.

"Purty soon Miss Rachel come down an' went up an' kissed her—dat is, Sam said so, though I ain't never seen her kiss her dat time nor no other time. Miss Rachel an' de mist'ess was bofe split out o' de same piece o' kindlin', an' what one was agin t' other was agin—a blind man could see

dat. Miss Rachel never liked Miss Nannie from de fust, she was dat cross-grained and pernicketty. No matter what Miss Nannie done to please her it warn't good 'nough for her. Why, do you know, when de other chillen come over from de nex' plantation Miss Rachel wouldn't send for Miss Nannie to come in de parlor. No, suh, dat she wouldn't! An' dey'd run off an' leave her, too, when dey was gwine picknickin', an' treat dat chile owdacious, sayin' she was po' white trash, an' charity chile, an' things like dat, till I would go an' tell Marse Henry 'bout it. Den dere would be a ruction, an' Marse Henry'd blaze out, an' jes 's soon 's he was off agin to Frankfort—an' he was dere mos' o' de time, for he was one o' dese yere ole-timers dat dey couldn't git 'long widout at de Legislater—dey'd treat her wus'n ever. Soon's Dinah an' me see dat, we kep' Miss Nannie 'long wid us much as we could. She'd eat wid 'em when dere warn't no company 'round, but dat was 'bout all."

"Did they send her to school?" I asked, fearing she would again lose the thread. My picture had a new meaning for me now that it looked like her heroine.

"No, suh, dat dey didn't, 'cept to de schoolhouse at de cross-roads whar eve'ybody's chillen went. But dey sent Miss Rachel to a real highty-tighty school, dat dey did, down to Louisville. Two winters she was dere, an' eve'y time when she come home for holiday times she had mo' airs dan when she went away. Marse Henry wanted bofe chillen to go, but dat woman outdid him, an' she faced him up an' down dat dere warn't money 'nough for two, an' dat her daughter was de fittenest, an' all dat, an' he give in. I didn't hear it, but ole Sam did, an' his han' shook so he mos' spilt de soup. But law, honey, dat didn't make no diff'ence to Miss Nannie. She'd go off by herse'f wid her books an' sit all day under de trees, an' sing to herse'f jes' like a bird, an' dey'd sing to her, an' all dat time her face was a-beamin' an' her hair shinin' like gold, an' she a-growin' taller, an' her eyes gittin' bigger an' bigger, an' brighter, an' her little footses white an' cunnin' as a rabbit's.

"De only place whar she did go outside de big house was over to Mis' Morgan's, who lived on de nex' plantation. Mis' Morgan didn't hab no chillen of her own, an' she'd

send for Miss Nannie to come an' keep her company, she was dat dead lonesome, an' dey was glad 'nough to let dat chile go so dey could git her out o' de house. Ole Sam allers said dat, for he heared 'em talk at table an' knowed what was gwine on.

"Purty soon 'long come de time when Miss Rachel done finish her eddication, an' she come back to de big house an' sot herse'f up to 'ceive company. She warn't bad lookin' in dem days, I mus' say, an' if dat woman's sperit hadn't 'a' been in her she might 'a' pulled through. But dere warn't no fotching up could stand agin dat blood. Miss Rachel 'd git dat ornery dat you could n't do nuffin wid her, jes' like her maw. De fust real out-an'-out beau she had was Dr. Tom Boling. He lived 'bout fo'teen miles out o' Lexin'ton on de big plantation, an' was de richest young man in our parts. His paw had died 'bout two years befo' an' lef' him mo' money dan he could th'ow away, an' he'd jes' come back from Philadelphy, whar he'd been a-learnin' to be a doctor. He met Miss Rachel at a party in Louisville, an' de fust Sunday she come home he driv over to see her. If ye could 'a' seen de mist'ess when she see him comin' in de gate! All in his ridin' boots an' his yaller breeches an' bottle-green coat, an his servant a-ridin' behind to hold de horses.

"Ole Sam an' me was a-watchin' de mist'ess peekin' th'ough de blind at him, her eyes a-blazin', an' Sam laughed so he had to stuff a napkin in his mouf to keep 'er from hearin' him. Well, suh, dat went on all de summer. Eve'y time he come de mist'ess 'd be dat sweet mos' make a body sick to see her, an' when he'd stay away she was dat pesky dere warn't no livin' wid her. Of co'se dere was plenty mo' gemmen co'rting Miss Rachel, too, but none o' dem didn't count wid de mist'ess 'cept de doctor, 'cause he was rich, dat's all dere was to 't, 'cause he was rich. I tell ye ole Sam had to tell many a lie to the other gemmen, sayin' Miss Rachel was sick or somethin' else when she was a-waitin' for de doctor to come, and was feared he might meet some of 'em an' git skeered away.

"Miss Nannie, she'd watch him, too, from behind de kitchen door, or scrunched down lookin' over de pantry winder sill, an' den she'd tell Dinah an' me what he did,

an' how he got off his horse an' han' de reins to de boy, an' slap his boots wid his ridin' whip, like he was a-dustin' off a fly. An' she'd act it all out for me an' Dinah, an' slap her own frock, an' den she'd laugh fit to kill herse'f an' dance all 'round de kitchen. Would yo' believe it? No! dere ain't nobody 'd believe it. Dey never asked her to come in once while he was in de parlor, an' dey never once tole him dat Miss Nannie was a-livin' on de top side o' de yearth!

"Co'se people 'gin to talk, an' ev'ybody said dat Dr. Boling was gittin' nighest de coon, an' dat fust thing dey'd know dere would be a weddin' in de Gordon fambly. An' den agin dere was plenty mo' people said he was only passin' de time wid Miss Rachel, an' dat he come to see Marse Henry to talk pol'tics.

"Well, one day, suh, I was a-standin' in de door an' I see him come in a-foot, widout his horse an' servant, an' step up on de po'ch quick an' rap at de do', like he say to himse'f, 'Lemme in; I'm in a hurry; I got somethin' on my mind.' Ole Sam was jes' a-gwine to open de do' for him when Miss Nannie come a-runnin' in de kitchen from de yard, her cheeks like de roses, her hair a-flyin', an' her big hat hangin' to a string down her back. I gin Sam one look an' he stopped, an' I says to Miss Nannie, 'Run, honey,' I says, 'an' open de do' for ole Sam; I spec',' I says, 'it's one o' dem peddlers.'

"If you could a' seen dat chile's face when she come back!"

Aunt Chloe's hands were now waving above her head, her mouth wide open in her merriment, every tooth shining.

"She was white one minute an' red as a beet the nex'. 'Oh, Aunt Chloe, what did you let me go for?' she says 'Oh! I wouldn't 'a' let him see me like dis for anythin' in de wo'ld. Oh, I'm dat put out.'

" 'What did he say to ye, honey?' I says.

" 'He didn't say nuffin; he jes' look at me an' say he beg my pardon, an' was Miss Rachel in, an' den I said I'd run an' tell her, an' when I come downstairs agin he was a-standin' in de hall wid his eyes up de staircase, an' he never stopped lookin' at me till I come down.'

"'Well, dat won't do you no harm, chile,' I says; 'a cat kin look at a king.'

"Ole Sam was a-watchin' her, too, an' when she'd gone in her leetle room an' shet de do' Sam says, 'I'll lay if Marse Tom Boling had anythin' on his mind when he come here to-day it's mighty onsettled by dis time.'

"Nex' time Dr. Tom Boling come he say to de mist'ess, 'Who's dat young lady,' he says, 'dat opened de door for me las' time I was here? I hoped to see her agin. Is she in?'

"Den dey bofe cooked up some lie 'bout her bein' over to Mis' Morgan's or somethin', an' as soon 's he was gone dey come down an' riz Sam for not 'tendin' de door an' lettin' dat ragged fly-away gal open it. Den dey went for Miss Nannie till dey made her cry, an' she come to me, an' I took her in my lap an' comfo'ted her like I allers did.

"De nex' time he come he says, 'I hear dat yo'r niece, Miss Nannie Barnes, is livin' wid you, an' dat she is ve'y 'sclusive. I hope dat you'll 'suade her to come in de parlor,' he says. Dem was his ve'y words. Sam was a-standin' close to him as I am to you an' he heared him.

"'She ain't yet in s'ciety,' de mist'ess says, 'an' she's dat wild dat we can't p'esent her.'

"'Oh! is dat so?' he says. 'Is she in now?'

"'No,' she says, 'she's over to Mis' Morgan's.'

"Dat was a fac' dis time; she'd gone dat very mawnin'. Den Miss Rachel come down, an' co'se Sam didn't hear no mo' 'cause he had to go out. Purty soon out de doctor come. Dese visits, min' ye, was gittin' shorter an' shorter, though he do come as often, an' over he goes to Mis' Morgan's hisse'f.

"Now I doan' know what he said to Miss Nannie, or what passed 'twixt 'em, 'cause she didn't tell me. Only dat she said he had come to see Mis' Morgan 'bout some land matters, an' dat Mis' Morgan interjuced 'em, but nuffin mo'. Lord bless dat chile! An', suh, dat was de fust time she ever kep' anythin' from her ole mammy. Dat made me mo' glad 'n ever. I knowed den dey was bofe hit.

"But my lan', de fur begin to fly when de mist'ess an Miss Rachel heared 'bout dat visit!

"'What you mean by makin' eyes at Dr. Boling? Don't you know he's good as 'gaged to my daughter?' de mist'ess said. Dat was a lie, for he never said a word to Miss Rachel; ole Sam could tole you dat. 'Git out o' my house, you good-for-nothin' pauper, an' take yo' rags wid ye.'

"I see right away de fat was in de fire. Marse Henry warn't 'spected home till de nex' Sunday, an' so I tuk her over to Mis' Morgan, an' den I ups an' tells her eve'ything dat woman had done to dat chile since de day she come. An' when I'd done she tuk Miss Nannie by de han' an' she says:—

"'You won't never want a home, chile, so long as I live. Go back, Chloe, an' git her clo'es.' But I didn't git 'em. I knowed Marse Henry 'd raise de roof when he come, an' he did, bless yo' heart. Went over hisse'f an' got her, an' brought her home, an' dat night when Dr. Boling come he made her sit down in de parlor, an' 'fo' he went home dat night de Doctor he say to Marse Henry, 'I want yo' permission, Mister Gordon, to pay my addresses to Miss Nannie, yo' niece.' Sam was a-standing close as he could git to de door, an' he heard ev'y word. Now he ain't never said dat, mind ye, to Marse Henry 'bout Miss Rachel! An' dat's why I know dat he warn't hit unto death wid her.

"Well, do you know, suh, dat dat woman was dat owdacious she wouldn't let 'em see each other after dat 'cept on de front po'ch. Wouldn't let 'em come in de house; make 'em do all dere co'rtin' on de steps an' out at de paster gate. De doctor would rare an' pitch an' git white in de face at de scand'lous way dat Miss Barnes was bein' treated, until Miss Nannie put bofe her leetle han's on his'n, soothin' like, an' den he'd grab 'em an' kiss 'em like he'd eat 'em up. Sam cotched him at it, an' done tole me; an' den dey'd sa'nter off down de po'ch, sayin' it was too hot or too cool, or dat dey was lookin' for birds' nests in de po'ch vines, till dey'd git to de far end, where de mist'ess nor Sam nor nobody else couldn't hear what dey was a-sayin' an' a-whisperin', an' dere dey'd sit fer hours.

"But I tell ye de doctor had a hard time a-gittin' her even when Marse Henry gin his consent. An' he never would 'a' got her if Miss Rachel, jes' for spite, I spec',

hadn't 'a' took up wid Colonel Todhunter's son dat was a-co'rtin' on her too, an' run off an' married him. Den Miss Nannie knowed she was free to follow her own heart.

"I tell you it'd 'a' made ye cry yo' eyes out, suh, to see dat chile try an' fix herse'f up to meet him de days an' nights she knowed he was comin', an' she wid jes' one white frock to her name. An' we all felt jes' as bad as her. Dinah would wash it an' I'd smooth her hair, an' ole Sam 'd git her a fresh rose to put in her neck.

"Purty soon de weddin' day was 'pinted, an' me an' Dinah an' ole Sam 'gin to wonder how dat chile was a-gwine to git clo'es to be married in. Sam heared ole marster ask dat same question at de table, an' he see him gib de mist'ess de money to buy 'em for her, an' de mist'ess said dat she reckoned 'Miss Nannie's people would want de priv'lege o' dressin' her now dat she was a-gwine to marry dat wo'thless young doctor, Tom Boling, dat nobody wouldn't hab in de house, but dat if dey didn't she'd gin her some of Miss Rachel's clo'es, an' if dem warn't 'nough den she'd spen' de money to de best advantage.' Dem was her ve'y words. Sam heared her say 'em. I knowed dat meant dat de chile would go naked, for she wouldn't a-worn none o' Miss Rachel's rubbish, an' not a cent would she git o' de money. So I got dat ole white frock out, an' Dinah found a white ribbon in a ole trunk in de garret, an' washed an' ironed it to tie 'round her waist, an' Miss Nannie come an' look at it, an' when she see it de tears riz up in her eyes.

"'Doan' you cry, chile,' I says. 'He ain't lovin' ye for yo' clo'es, an' never did. Fust time he see ye yo' was purty nigh barefoot. It's you he wants, not yo' frocks, honey;' an' den de sun come out in her face an' her eyes dried up, an' she 'gin to smile an' sing like a robin after de rain.

"Purty soon 'long come Chris'mas time, an' me an' ole Sam an' Dinah was a-watchin' out to see what Marse Tom Boling was gwine to gin his bride, fur she was purty nigh dat, as dey was to be married de week after Chris'mas. Well, suh, de mawnin' 'fore Chris'mas come, an' den de arternoon come, an' den de night come, an' mos' ev'y hour somebody sent somethin' for Miss Rachel, an' yet not one scrap of nuffin big as a chink-a-pin come for Miss Nannie.

Dinah an' me was dat onres'less dat we couldn't sleep. Miss Nannie didn't say nuffin when she went to bed, but I see a little shadder creep over her face an' I knowed right away what hurted her.

"Well, de nex' mawnin'—Chris'mas mawnin' dat was—ole Sam come a-bustin' in de kitchen do', a-hollerin' loud as he could holler"—Aunt Chloe was now rocking herself back and forth, clapping her hands as she talked—"dat dere was a trunk on de front po'ch for Miss Nannie dat was dat heavy it tuk fo' niggers to lif' it. I run, an' Dinah run, an' when we got to de trunk mos' all de niggers was thick 'round it as flies, an' Miss Nannie was standin' over it readin' a card wid her name on it an' a 'scription sayin' dat it was 'a Chris'mas gif', wid de compliments of a friend.' But who dat friend was, whether it was Marse Henry, who sent it dat way so dat woman wouldn't tear his hair out; or whether Mis' Morgan sent it, dat hadn't mo'n 'nough money to live on; or whether some of her own kin in Indiany, dat was dirt po', stole de money an' sent it; or whether de young Dr. Tom Boling, who had mo' money dan all de banks in Lexin'ton, done did it, don't nobody know till dis day, 'cept me an' ole Sam, an' we ain't tellin'.

"But, my soul alive, de insides of dat trunk took de bref clean out o' de mist'ess an' Miss Rachel. Sam opened it, an' I tuk out de things. Honey! dere was a weddin' dress all white satin dat would stand alone,—jes' de ve'y mate of de one you got in dat picter 'fore ye,—an' a change'ble silk, dat heavy! an' a plaid one, an' eve'ything a young lady could git on her back from her skin out, an' a thousand-dollar watch an' chain. I wore dat watch myse'f; Miss Nannie was standin' by me, a-clappin' her han's an' laughin', an' when dat watch an' chain came out she jes' th'owed de chain over my neck an' stuck de leetle watch in my bosom, an' says, 'Dere, you dear ole mammy, go look at you'se'f in de glass an' see how fine you is.'

"De nex' week come de weddin', I'll never forgit dat weddin' to my dyin' day. Marse Tom Boling driv in wid a coach an' four an' two outriders, an' de horses wore white ribbons on dere ears; an' de coachman had flowers in his coat mos' big as his head, an' dey whirled up in front of de

po'ch, an' out he stepped in his blue coat an' brass buttons an' a yaller wais'coat,—yaller as a gourd,—an' his bell-crown hat in his han'. She was a-waitin' for him wid dat white satin dress on, an' de chain 'round her neck, an' her lil footses tied up wid silk ribbons de ve'y match o' dem you got pietered, an' her face shinin' like a angel. An' all de niggers was a-standin' 'roun' de po'ch, dere eyes out'n dere heads, an' Marse Henry was dere in his new clo'es lookin' so grand, an' Sam in his white gloves, an' me in a new head han'chief.

"Eve'body was happy 'cept one. Dat one was de mist'ess, standin' in de door. She wouldn't come out to de coach where de horses was a-champin' de bits an' de froth a-droppin' on de groun', an' she wouldn't speak to Marse Tom. She kep' back in de do'way.

"Miss Rachel was dat mean she wouldn't come downstairs.

"Miss Nannie gib Marse Tom Boling her han' an' look up in his face like a queen, an' den she kissed Marse Henry, an' whispered somethin' in his ear dat nobody didn't hear, only de tears gin to jump out an' roll down his cheeks, an' den she looked de mist'ess full in de face, an' 'thout a word dropped her a low curtsey.

"I come de las'. She looked at me for a minute wid her eyes a-swimmin', an' den she th'owed her arms roun' my neck an' hugged an' kissed me, an' den I see an arm slip 'roun' her wais' an' lif' her in de coach. Den de horses 'gin a plunge an' dey was off.

"An' arter dat dey had five years—de happiest years dem two ever seen. I know, 'cause Marse Henry gin me to her, an' I lived wid 'em day in an' day out till dat baby come, an' den—"

Aunt Chloe stopped and reached out her hand as if to steady herself. The tears were streaming down her cheeks.

Then she advanced a step, fixed her eyes on the portrait, and in a voice broken with emotion, said:—

"Honey, chile,—honey, chile,—is you tired a-waitin' for yo' ole mammy? Keep a-watchin', honey—keep a-watchin'—It won't be long now 'fore I come. Keep a-watchin'."

BY THE WATERS OF PARADISE

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD

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I

I REMEMBER my childhood very distinctly. I do not think that the fact argues a good memory, for I have never been clever at learning words by heart, in prose or rhyme; so that I believe my remembrance of events depends much more upon the events themselves than upon my possessing any special facility for recalling them. Perhaps I am too imaginative, and the earliest impressions I received were of a kind to stimulate the imagination abnormally. A long series of little misfortunes, so connected with each other as to suggest a sort of weird fatality, so worked upon my melancholy temperament when I was a boy that, before I was of age, I sincerely believed myself to be under a curse, and not only myself, but my whole family and every individual who bore my name.

I was born in the old place where my father, and his father, and all his predecessors had been born, beyond the memory of man. It is a very old house, and the greater part of it was originally a castle, strongly fortified, and surrounded by a steep moat supplied with abundant water from the hills by a hidden aqueduct. Many of the fortifications have been destroyed, and the moat has been filled up. The water from the aqueduct supplies great fountains, and runs down into huge oblong basins in the terraced gardens, one below the other, each surrounded by a broad pavement of marble between the water and the flower-beds. The waste surplus finally escapes through an artificial grotto, some thirty yards long, into a stream, flowing down through the park to the meadows beyond, and thence to the distant river. The buildings were extended a little and greatly altered more than two hundred years ago, in the time of Charles

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II, but since then little has been done to improve them, though they have been kept in fairly good repair, according to our fortunes.

In the gardens there are terraces and huge hedges of box and evergreen, some of which used to be clipped into shapes of animals, in the Italian style. I can remember when I was a lad how I used to try to make out what the trees were cut to represent, and how I used to appeal for explanations to Judith, my Welsh nurse. She dealt in a strange mythology of her own, and peopled the gardens with griffins, dragons, good genii and bad, and filled my mind with them at the same time. My nursery window afforded a view of the great fountains at the head of the upper basin, and on moonlight nights the Welshwoman would hold me up to the glass and bid me look at the mist and spray rising into mysterious shapes, moving mystically in the white light like living things.

"It's the Woman of the Water," she used to say; and sometimes she would threaten that if I did not go to sleep the Woman of the Water would steal up to the high window and carry me away in her wet arms.

The place was gloomy. The broad basins of water and the tall evergreen hedges gave it a funereal look, and the damp-stained marble causeways by the pools might have been made of tombstones. The gray and weather-beaten walls and towers without, the dark and massively furnished rooms within, the deep, mysterious recesses and the heavy curtains, all affected my spirits. I was silent and sad from my childhood. There was a great clock tower above, from which the hours rang dismally during the day, and tolled like a knell in the dead of night. There was no light nor life in the house, for my mother was a helpless invalid, and my father had grown melancholy in his long task of caring for her. He was a thin, dark man, with sad eyes; kind, I think, but silent and unhappy. Next to my mother, I believe he loved me better than anything on earth, for he took immense pains and trouble in teaching me, and what he taught me I have never forgotten. Perhaps it was his only amusement, and that may be the reason why I had no nursery governess or teacher of any kind while he lived.

F HOPKINSON SMITH

I used to be taken to see my mother every day, and sometimes twice a day, for an hour at a time. Then I sat upon a little stool near her feet, and she would ask me what I had been doing, and what I wanted to do. I dare say she saw already the seeds of a profound melancholy in my nature, for she looked at me always with a sad smile, and kissed me with a sigh when I was taken away.

One night, when I was just six years old, I lay awake in the nursery. The door was not quite shut, and the Welsh nurse was sitting sewing in the next room. Suddenly I heard her groan, and say in a strange voice, "One—two—one—two!" I was frightened, and I jumped up and ran to the door, barefooted as I was.

"What is it, Judith?" I cried, clinging to her skirts. I can remember the look in her strange dark eyes as she answered:

"One—two leaden coffins, fallen from the ceiling!" she crooned, working herself in her chair. "One—two—a light coffin and a heavy coffin, falling to the floor!"

Then she seemed to notice me, and she took me back to bed and sang me to sleep with a queer old Welsh song.

I do not know how it was, but the impression got hold of me that she had meant that my father and mother were going to die very soon. They died in the very room where she had been sitting that night. It was a great room, my day nursery, full of sun when there was any; and when the days were dark it was the most cheerful place in the house. My mother grew rapidly worse, and I was transferred to another part of the building to make place for her. They thought my nursery was gayer for her, I suppose; but she could not live. She was beautiful when she was dead, and I cried bitterly.

"The light one, the light one—the heavy one to come," crooned the Welshwoman. And she was right. My father took the room after my mother was gone, and day by day he grew thinner and paler and sadder.

"The heavy one, the heavy one—all of lead," moaned my nurse, one night in December, standing still, just as she was going to take away the light after putting me to bed. Then she took me up again and wrapped me in a little gown, and

led me away to my father's room. She knocked, but no one answered. She opened the door, and we found him in his easy chair before the fire, very white, quite dead.

So I was alone with the Welshwoman till strange people came, and relations whom I had never seen; and then I heard them saying that I must be taken away to some more cheerful place. They were kind people, and I will not believe that they were kind only because I was to be very rich when I grew to be a man. The world never seemed to be a very bad place to me, nor all the people to be miserable sinners, even when I was most melancholy. I do not remember that any one ever did me any great injustice, nor that I was ever oppressed or ill-treated in any way, even by the boys at school. I was sad, I suppose, because my childhood was so gloomy, and, later, because I was unlucky in everything I undertook, till I finally believed I was pursued by fate, and I used to dream that the old Welsh nurse and the Woman of the Water between them had vowed to pursue me to my end. But my natural disposition should have been cheerful, as I have often thought.

Among the lads of my age I was never last, or even among the last, in anything; but I was never first. If I trained for a race, I was sure to sprain my ankle on the day when I was to run. If I pulled an oar with others, my oar was sure to break. If I competed for a prize, some unforeseen accident prevented my winning it at the last moment. Nothing to which I put my hand succeeded, and I got the reputation of being unlucky, until my companions felt it was always safe to bet against me, no matter what the appearances might be. I became discouraged and listless in everything. I gave up the idea of competing for any distinction at the University, comforting myself with the thought that I could not fail in the examination for the ordinary degree. The day before the examination began I fell ill; and when at last I recovered, after a narrow escape from death, I turned my back upon Oxford, and went down alone to visit the old place where I had been born, feeble in health and profoundly disgusted and discouraged. I was twenty-one years of age, master of myself and of my fortune; but so deeply had the long chain of small unlucky

circumstances affected me that I thought seriously of shutting myself up from the world to live the life of a hermit and to die as soon as possible. Death seemed the only cheerful possibility in my existence, and my thoughts soon dwelt upon it altogether.

I had never shown any wish to return to my own home since I had been taken away as a little boy, and no one had ever pressed me to do so. The place had been kept in order after a fashion, and did not seem to have suffered during the fifteen years or more of my absence. Nothing earthly could affect those old gray walls that had fought the elements for so many centuries. The garden was more wild than I remembered it; the marble causeways about the pools looked more yellow and damp than of old, and the whole place at first looked smaller. It was not until I had wandered about the house and grounds for many hours that I realized the huge size of the home where I was to live in solitude. Then I began to delight in it, and my resolution to live alone grew stronger.

The people had turned out to welcome me, of course, and I tried to recognize the changed faces of the old gardener and the old housekeeper, and to call them by name. My old nurse I knew at once. She had grown very gray since she heard the coffins fall in the nursery fifteen years before, but her strange eyes were the same, and the look in them woke all my old memories. She went over the house with me.

"And how is the Woman of the Water?" I asked, trying to laugh a little. "Does she still play in the moonlight?"

"She is hungry," answered the Welshwoman, in a low voice.

"Hungry? Then we will feed her." I laughed. But old Judith turned very pale, and looked at me strangely.

"Feed her? Ay—you will feed her well," she muttered, glancing behind her at the ancient housekeeper, who tottered after us with feeble steps through the halls and passages.

I did not think much of her words. She had always talked oddly, as Welshwomen will, and though I was very melancholy I am sure I was not superstitious, and I was

certainly not timid. Only, as in a far-off dream, I seemed to see her standing with the light in her hand and muttering, "The heavy one—all of lead," and then leading a little boy through the long corridors to see his father lying dead in a great easy chair before a smouldering fire. So we went over the house, and I chose the rooms where I would live; and the servants I had brought with me ordered and arranged everything, and I had no more trouble. I did not care what they did provided I was left in peace and was not expected to give directions; for I was more listless than ever, owing to the effects of my illness at college.

I dined in solitary state, and the melancholy grandeur of the vast old dining-room pleased me. Then I went to the room I had selected for my study, and sat down in a deep chair, under a bright light, to think, or to let my thoughts meander through labyrinths of their own choosing, utterly indifferent to the course they might take.

The tall windows of the room opened to the level of the ground upon the terrace at the head of the garden. It was in the end of July, and everything was open, for the weather was warm. As I sat alone I heard the unceasing splash of the great fountains, and I fell to thinking of the Woman of the Water. I rose and went out into the still night, and sat down upon a seat on the terrace, between two gigantic Italian flower-pots. The air was deliciously soft and sweet with the smell of the flowers, and the garden was more congenial to me than the house. Sad people always like running water and the sound of it at night, though I cannot tell why. I sat and listened in the gloom, for it was dark below, and the pale moon had not yet climbed over the hills in front of me, though all the air above was light with her rising beams. Slowly the white halo in the eastern sky ascended in an arch above the wooded crests, making the outlines of the mountains more intensely black by contrast, as though the head of some great white saint were rising from behind a screen in a vast cathedral, throwing misty glories from below. I longed to see the moon herself, and I tried to reckon the seconds before she must appear. Then she sprang up quickly, and in a moment more hung round and perfect in the sky. I gazed at her, and then at the floating

spray of the tall fountains, and down at the pools, where the waterlilies were rocking softly in their sleep on the velvet surface of the moonlit water. Just then a great swan floated out silently into the midst of the basin, and wreathed his long neck, catching the water in his broad bill, and scattering showers of diamonds around him.

Suddenly, as I gazed, something came between me and the light. I looked up instantly. Between me and the round disk of the moon rose a luminous face of a woman, with great strange eyes, and a woman's mouth, full and soft, but not smiling, hooded in black, staring at me as I sat still upon my bench. She was close to me—so close that I could have touched her with my hand. But I was transfixed and helpless. She stood still for a moment, but her expression did not change. Then she passed swiftly away, and my hair stood up on my head, while the cold breeze from her white dress was wafted to my temples as she moved. The moonlight, shining through the tossing spray of the fountain, made traceries of shadow on the gleaming folds of her garments. In an instant she was gone and I was alone.

I was strangely shaken by the vision, and some time passed before I could rise to my feet, for I was still weak from my illness, and the sight I had seen would have startled any one. I did not reason with myself, for I was certain that I had looked on the unearthly, and no argument could have destroyed that belief. At last I got up and stood unsteadily, gazing in the direction in which I thought the face had gone; but there was nothing to be seen—nothing but the broad paths, the tall, dark evergreen hedges, the tossing water of the fountains and the smooth pool below. I fell back upon the seat and recalled the face I had seen. Strange to say, now that the first impression had passed, there was nothing startling in the recollection; on the contrary, I felt that I was fascinated by the face, and would give anything to see it again. I could retrace the beautiful straight features, the long dark eyes, and the wonderful mouth most exactly in my mind, and when I had reconstructed every detail from memory I knew that the whole was beautiful, and that I should love a woman with such a face.

"I wonder whether she is the Woman of the Water!"

I said to myself. Then rising once more, I wandered down the garden, descending one short flight of steps after another from terrace to terrace by the edge of the marble basins, through the shadow and through the moonlight; and I crossed the water by the rustic bridge above the artificial grotto, and climbed slowly up again to the highest terrace by the other side. The air seemed sweeter, and I was very calm, so that I think I smiled to myself as I walked, as though a new happiness had come to me. The woman's face seemed always before me, and the thought of it gave me an unwonted thrill of pleasure, unlike anything I had ever felt before.

I turned as I reached the house, and looked back upon the scene. It had certainly changed in the short hour since I had come out, and my mood had changed with it. Just like my luck, I thought, to fall in love with a ghost! But in old times I would have sighed, and gone to bed more sad than ever, at such a melancholy conclusion. To-night I felt happy, almost for the first time in my life. The gloomy old study seemed cheerful when I went in. The old pictures on the walls smiled at me, and I sat down in my deep chair with a new and delightful sensation that I was not alone. The idea of having seen a ghost, and of feeling much the better for it, was so absurd that I laughed softly, as I took up one of the books I had brought with me and began to read.

That impression did not wear off. I slept peacefully, and in the morning I threw open my windows to the summer air and looked down at the garden, at the stretches of green and at the colored flower-beds, at the circling swallows and at the bright water.

"A man might make a paradise of this place," I exclaimed. "A man and a woman together!"

From that day the old Castle no longer seemed gloomy, and I think I ceased to be sad; for some time, too, I began to take an interest in the place, and to try and make it more alive. I avoided my old Welsh nurse, lest she should damp my humor with some dismal prophecy, and recall my old self by bringing back memories of my dismal childhood. But what I thought of most was the ghostly figure I had seen in the garden that first night after my arrival. I went out

every evening and wandered through the walks and paths; but, try as I might, I did not see my vision again. At last, after many days, the memory grew more faint, and my old moody nature gradually overcame the temporary sense of lightness I had experienced. The summer turned to autumn, and I grew restless. It began to rain. The dampness pervaded the gardens, and the outer halls smelled musty, like tombs; the gray sky oppressed me intolerably. I left the place as it was and went abroad, determined to try anything which might possibly make a second break in the monotonous melancholy from which I suffered.

II

Most people would be struck by the utter insignificance of the small events which, after the death of my parents, influenced my life and made me unhappy. The gruesome forebodings of a Welsh nurse, which chanced to be realized by an odd coincidence of events, should not seem enough to change the nature of a child and to direct the bent of his character in after years. The little disappointments of schoolboy life, and the somewhat less childish ones of an uneventful and undistinguished academic career, should not have sufficed to turn me out at one-and-twenty years of age a melancholic, listless idler. Some weakness of my own character may have contributed to the result, but in a greater degree it was due to my having a reputation for bad luck. However, I will not try to analyze the causes of my state, for I should satisfy nobody, least of all myself. Still less will I attempt to explain why I felt a temporary revival of my spirits after my adventure in the garden. It is certain that I was in love with the face I had seen, and that I longed to see it again; that I gave up all hope of a second visitation, grew more sad than ever, packed up my traps, and finally went abroad. But in my dreams I went back to my home, and it always appeared to me sunny and bright, as it had looked on that summer's morning after I had seen the woman by the fountain.

I went to Paris. I went farther, and wandered about

Germany. I tried to amuse myself, and I failed miserably. With the aimless whims of an idle and useless man come all sorts of suggestions for good resolutions. One day I made up my mind that I would go and bury myself in a German university for a time, and live simply like a poor student. I started with the intention of going to Leipzig, determined to stay there until some event should direct my life or change my humor, or make an end of me altogether. The express train stopped at some station of which I did not know the name. It was dusk on a winter's afternoon, and I peered through the thick glass from my seat. Suddenly another train came gliding in from the opposite direction, and stopped alongside of ours. I looked at the carriage which chanced to be abreast of mine, and idly read the black letters painted on a white board swinging from the brass handrail: Berlin—Cologne—Paris. Then I looked up at the window above. I started violently, and the cold perspiration broke out upon my forehead. In the dim light, not six feet from where I sat, I saw the face of a woman, the face I loved, the straight, fine features, the strange eyes, the wonderful mouth, the pale skin. Her head-dress was a dark veil which seemed to be tied about her head and passed over the shoulders under her chin. As I threw down the window and knelt on the cushioned seat, leaning far out to get a better view, a long whistle screamed through the station, followed by a quick series of dull, clanking sounds; then there was a slight jerk, and my train moved on. Luckily the window was narrow, being the one over the seat, beside the door, or I believe I would have jumped out of it then and there. In an instant the speed increased, and I was being carried swiftly away in the opposite direction from the thing I loved.

For a quarter of an hour I lay back in my place, stunned by the suddenness of the apparition. At last one of the two other passengers, a large and gorgeous captain of the White Konigsberg Cuirassiers, civilly but firmly suggested that I might shut my window, as the evening was cold. I did so, with an apology, and relapsed into silence. The train ran swiftly on for a long time, and it was already beginning to slacken speed before entering another station, when I roused

myself and made a sudden resolution. As the carriage stopped before the brilliantly lighted platform, I seized my belongings, saluted my fellow-passengers, and got out, determined to take the first express back to Paris.

This time the circumstances of the vision had been so natural that it did not strike me that there was anything unreal about the face, or about the woman to whom it belonged. I did not try to explain to myself how the face, and the woman, could be travelling by a fast train from Berlin to Paris on a winter's afternoon, when both were in my mind indelibly associated with the moonlight and the fountains in my own English home. I certainly would not have admitted that I had been mistaken in the dusk, attributing to what I had seen a resemblance to my former vision which did not really exist. There was not the slightest doubt in my mind, and I was positively sure that I had again seen the face I loved. I did not hesitate, and in a few hours I was on my way back to Paris. I could not help reflecting on my ill luck. Wandering as I had been for many months, it might as easily have chanced that I should be travelling in the same train with that woman, instead of going the other way. But my luck was destined to turn for a time.

I searched Paris for several days. I dined at the principal hotels; I went to the theatres; I rode in the Bois de Boulogne in the morning, and picked up an acquaintance, whom I forced to drive with me in the afternoon. I went to mass at the Madeleine, and I attended the services at the English Church. I hung about the Louvre and Notre Dame. I went to Versailles. I spent hours in parading the Rue de Rivoli, in the neighborhood of Meurice's corner, where foreigners pass and repass from morning till night. At last I received an invitation to a reception at the English Embassy. I went, and I found what I had sought so long.

There she was, sitting by an old lady in gray satin and diamonds, who had a wrinkled but kindly face and keen gray eyes that seemed to take in everything they saw, with very little inclination to give much in return. But I did not notice the chaperon. I saw only the face that had haunted me for months, and in the excitement of the moment I walked

quickly towards the pair, forgetting such a trifle as the necessity for an introduction.

She was far more beautiful than I had thought, but I never doubted that it was she herself and no other. Vision or no vision before, this was the reality, and I knew it. Twice her hair had been covered, now at last I saw it, and the added beauty of its magnificence glorified the whole woman. It was rich hair, fine and abundant, golden, with deep ruddy tints in it like red bronze spun fine. There was no ornament in it, not a rose, not a thread of gold, and I felt that it needed nothing to enhance its splendor; nothing but her pale face, her dark strange eyes, and her heavy eyebrows. I could see that she was slender too, but strong withal, as she sat there quietly gazing at the moving scene in the midst of the brilliant lights and the hum of perpetual conversation.

I recollected the detail of introduction in time, and turned aside to look for my host. I found him at last. I begged him to present me to the two ladies, pointing them out to him at the same time.

"Yes—uh—by all means—uh," replied his Excellency with a pleasant smile. He evidently had no idea of my name, which was not to be wondered at.

"I am Lord Cairngorm," I observed.

"Oh—by all means," answered the Ambassador with the same hospitable smile. "Yes—uh—the fact is, I must try and find out who they are; such lots of people, you know."

"Oh, if you will present me, I will try and find out for you," said I , laughing.

"Ah, yes—so kind of you—come along," said my host. We threaded the crowd, and in a few minutes we stood before the two ladies.

"'Lowmintrduce L'd Cairngorm," he said; then, adding quickly to me, "Come and dine to-morrow, won't you?" he glided away with his pleasant smile and disappeared in the crowd.

I sat down beside the beautiful girl, conscious that the eyes of the duenna were upon me.

"I think we have been very near meeting before," I remarked, by way of opening the conversation.

My companion turned her eyes full upon me with an air of inquiry. She evidently did not recall my face, if she had ever seen me.

"Really—I cannot remember," she observed, in a low and musical voice. "When?"

"In the first place, you came down from Berlin by the express ten days ago. I was going the other way, and our carriages stopped opposite each other. I saw you at the window."

"Yes—we came that way, but I do not remember——" She hesitated.

"Secondly," I continued, "I was sitting alone in my garden last summer—near the end of July—do you remember? You must have wandered in there through the park; you came up to the house and looked at me——"

"Was that you?" she asked, in evident surprise. Then she broke into a laugh. "I told everybody I had seen a ghost; there had never been any Cairngorms in the place since the memory of man. We left the next day, and never heard that you had come there; indeed, I did not know the castle belonged to you."

"Where were you staying?" I asked.

"Where? Why, with my aunt, where I always stay. She is your neighbor, since it *is* you."

"I—beg your pardon—but then—is your aunt Lady Bluebell? I did not quite catch——"

"Don't be afraid. She is amazingly deaf. Yes. She is the relict of my beloved uncle, the sixteenth or seventeenth Baron Bluebell—I forget exactly how many of them there have been. And I—do you know who I am?" She laughed, well knowing that I did not.

"No," I answered frankly. "I have not the least idea. I asked to be introduced because I recognized you. Perhaps —perhaps you are a Miss Bluebell?"

"Considering that you are a neighbor, I will tell you who I am," she answered. "No; I am of the tribe of Bluebells, but my name is Lammas, and I have been given to understand that I was christened Margaret. Being a floral family, they call me Daisy. A dreadful American man once told me that my aunt was a Bluebell and that I was a Harebell—

with two l's and an e—because my hair is so thick. I warn you, so that you may avoid making such a bad pun."

"Do I look like a man who makes puns?" I asked, being very conscious of my melancholy face and sad looks.

Miss Lammas eyed me critically.

"No; you have a mournful temperament. I think I can trust you," she answered. "Do you think you could communicate to my aunt the fact that you are a Cairngorm and a neighbor? I am sure she would like to know."

I leaned towards the old lady, inflating my lungs for a yell. But Miss Lammas stopped me.

"That is not of the slightest use," she remarked. "You can write it on a bit of paper. She is utterly deaf."

"I have a pencil," I answered; "but I have no paper. Would my cuff do, do you think?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Miss Lammas, with alacrity; "men often do that."

I wrote on my cuff: "Miss Lammas wishes me to explain that I am your neighbor, Cairngorm." Then I held out my arm before the old lady's nose. She seemed perfectly accustomed to the proceeding, put up her glasses, read the words, smiled, nodded, and addressed me in the unearthly voice peculiar to people who hear nothing.

"I knew your grandfather very well," she said. Then she smiled and nodded to me again, and to her niece, and relapsed into silence.

"It is all right," remarked Miss Lammas. "Aunt Bluebell knows she is deaf, and does not say much, like the parrot. You see, she knew your grandfather. How odd that we should be neighbors! Why have we never met before?"

"If you had told me you knew my grandfather when you appeared in the garden, I should not have been in the least surprised," I answered rather irrelevantly. "I really thought you were the ghost of the old fountain. How in the world did you come there at that hour?"

"We were a large party and we went out for a walk. Then we thought we should like to see what your park was like in the moonlight, and so we trespassed. I got separated from the rest, and came upon you by accident, just as I

was admiring the extremely ghostly look of your house, and wondering whether anybody would ever come and live there again. It looks like the castle of Macbeth, or a scene from the opera. Do you know anybody here?"

"Hardly a soul! Do you?"

"No. Aunt Bluebell said it was our duty to come. It is easy for her to go out; she does not bear the burden of the conversation."

"I am sorry you find it a burden," said I. "Shall I go away?"

Miss Lammas looked at me with a sudden gravity in her beautiful eyes, and there was a sort of hesitation about the lines of her full, soft mouth.

"No," she said at last, quite simply, "don't go away. We may like each other, if you stay a little longer—and we ought to, because we are neighbors in the country."

I suppose I ought to have thought Miss Lammas a very odd girl. There is, indeed, a sort of freemasonry between people who discover that they live near each other and that they ought to have known each other before. But there was a sort of unexpected frankness and simplicity in the girl's amusing manner which would have struck any one else as being singular, to say the least of it. To me, however, it all seemed natural enough. I had dreamed of her face too long not to be utterly happy when I met her at last and could talk to her as much as I pleased. To me, the man of ill luck in everything, the whole meeting seemed too good to be true. I felt again that strange sensation of lightness which I had experienced after I had seen her face in the garden. The great rooms seemed brighter, life seemed worth living; my sluggish, melancholy blood ran faster, and filled me with a new sense of strength. I said to myself that without this woman I was but an imperfect being, but that with her I could accomplish everything to which I should set my hand. Like the great Doctor, when he thought he had cheated Mephistopheles at last, I could have cried aloud to the fleeting moment, *Verweile doch, du bist so schön!*

"Are you always gay?" I asked, suddenly. "How happy you must be!"

"The days would sometimes seem very long if I were

gloomy," she answered, thoughtfully. "Yes, I think I find life very pleasant, and I tell it so."

"How can you 'tell life' anything?" I inquired. "If I could catch my life and talk to it, I would abuse it prodigiously, I assure you."

"I dare say. You have a melancholy temper. You ought to live out-of-doors, dig potatoes, make hay, shoot, hunt, tumble into ditches, and come home muddy and hungry for dinner. It would be much better for you than moping in your rook tower and hating everything."

"It is rather lonely down there," I murmured, apologetically, feeling that Miss Lammas was quite right.

"Then marry, and quarrel with your wife," she laughed. "Anything is better than being alone."

"I am a very peaceable person. I never quarrel with anybody. You can try it. You will find it quite impossible."

"Will you let me try?" she asked, still smiling.

"By all means—especially if it is to be only a preliminary canter," I answered, rashly.

"What do you mean?" she inquired, turning quickly upon me.

"Oh—nothing. You might try my paces with a view to quarrelling in the future. I cannot imagine how you are going to do it. You will have to resort to immediate and direct abuse."

"No. I will only say that if you do not like your life, it is your own fault. How can a man of your age talk of being melancholy, or of the hollowness of existence? Are you consumptive? Are you subject to hereditary insanity? Are you deaf, like Aunt Bluebell? Are you poor, like—lots of people? Have you been crossed in love? Have you lost the world for a woman, or any particular woman for the sake of the world? Are you feeble-minded, a cripple, an outcast? Are you—repulsively ugly?" She laughed again. "Is there any reason in the world why you should not enjoy all you have got in life?"

"No. There is no reason whatever, except that I am dreadfully unlucky, especially in small things."

"Then try big things, just for a change," suggested Miss

Lammas. "Try and get married, for instance, and see how it turns out."

"If it turned out badly it would be rather serious."

"Not half so serious as it is to abuse everything unreasonably. If abuse is your particular talent, abuse something that ought to be abused. Abuse the Conservatives—or the Liberals—it does not matter which, since they are always abusing each other. Make yourself felt by other people. You will like it, if they don't. It will make a man of you. Fill your mouth with pebbles, and howl at the sea, if you cannot do anything else. It did Demosthenes no end of good, you know. You will have the satisfaction of imitating a great man."

"Really, Miss Lammas, I think the list of innocent exercises you propose——"

"Very well—if you don't care for that sort of thing, care for some other sort of thing. Care for something, or hate something. Don't be idle. Life is short, and though art may be long, plenty of noise answers nearly as well."

"I do care for something—I mean, somebody," I said.

"A woman? Then marry her. Don't hesitate."

"I do not know whether she would marry me," I replied. "I have never asked her."

"Then ask her at once," answered Miss Lammas. "I shall die happy if I feel I have persuaded a melancholy fellow-creature to rouse himself to action. Ask her, by all means, and see what she says. If she does not accept you at once, she may take you the next time. Meanwhile, you will have entered for the race. If you lose, there are the 'All-aged Trial Stakes,' and the 'Consolation Race.'"

"And plenty of selling races into the bargain. Shall I take you at your word, Miss Lammas?"

"I hope you will," she answered.

"Since you yourself advise me, I will. Miss Lammas, will you do me the honor to marry me?"

For the first time in my life the blood rushed to my head and my sight swam. I cannot tell why I said it. It would be useless to try to explain the extraordinary fascination the girl exercised over me, or the still more extraordinary feeling of intimacy with her which had grown in me during that

half-hour. Lonely, sad, unlucky as I had been all my life, I was certainly not timid, nor even shy. But to propose to marry a woman after half an hour's acquaintance was a piece of madness of which I never believed myself capable, and of which I should never be capable again, could I be placed in the same situation. It was as though my whole being had been changed in a moment by magic—by the white magic of her nature brought into contact with mine. The blood sank back to my heart, and a moment later I found myself staring at her with anxious eyes. To my amazement she was as calm as ever, but her beautiful mouth smiled, and there was a mischievous light in her dark-brown eyes.

"Fairly caught," she answered. "For an individual who pretends to be listless and sad you are not lacking in humor. I had really not the least idea what you were going to say. Wouldn't it be singularly awkward for you if I had said 'Yes'? I never saw anybody begin to practise so sharply what was preached to him—with so very little loss of time!"

"You probably never met a man who had dreamed of you for seven months before being introduced."

"No, I never did," she answered gaily. "It smacks of the romantic. Perhaps you are a romantic character, after all. I should think you were if I believed you. Very well; you have taken my advice, entered for a Stranger's Race and lost it. Try the All-aged Trial Stakes. You have another cuff, and a pencil. Propose to Aunt Bluebell; she would dance with astonishment, and she might recover her hearing."

III

That was how I first asked Margaret Lammas to be my wife, and I will agree with any one who says I behaved very foolishly. But I have not repented of it, and I never shall. I have long ago understood that I was out of my mind that evening, but I think my temporary insanity on that occasion has had the effect of making me a saner man ever since. Her manner turned my head, for it was so different from what I had expected. To hear this lovely creature, who, in my imagination, was a

heroine of romance, if not of tragedy, talking familiarly and laughing readily was more than my equanimity could bear, and I lost my head as well as my heart. But when I went back to England in the spring, I went to make certain arrangements at the Castle—certain changes and improvements which would be absolutely necessary. I had won the race for which I had entered myself so rashly, and we were to be married in June.

Whether the change was due to the orders I had left with the gardener and the rest of the servants, or to my own state of mind, I cannot tell. At all events, the old place did not look the same to me when I opened my window on the morning after my arrival. There were the gray walls below me and the gray turrets flanking the huge building; there were the fountains, the marble causeways, the smooth basins, the tall box hedges, the water-lilies, and the swans, just as of old. But there was something else there, too—something in the air, in the water, and in the greenness that I did not recognize—a light over everything by which everything was transfigured. The clock in the tower struck seven, and the strokes of the ancient bell sounded like a wedding chime. The air sang with the thrilling treble of the song-birds, with the silvery music of the plashing water and the softer harmony of the leaves stirred by the fresh morning wind. There was a smell of new-mown hay from the distant meadows, and of blooming roses from the beds below, wafted up together to my window. I stood in the pure sunshine and drank the air and all the sounds and the odors that were in it; and I looked down at my garden and said: "It is Paradise, after all." I think the men of old were right when they called heaven a garden, and Eden a garden inhabited by one man and one woman, the Earthly Paradise.

I turned away, wondering what had become of the gloomy memories I had always associated with my home. I tried to recall the impression of my nurse's horrible prophecy before the death of my parents—an impression which hitherto had been vivid enough. I tried to remember my old self, my dejection, my listlessness, my bad luck, my petty disappointments. I endeavored to force myself to think as I used to think, if only to satisfy myself that I had not lost my indi-

viduality. But I succeeded in none of these efforts. I was a different man, a changed being, incapable of sorrow, of ill luck, or of sadness. My life had been a dream, not evil, but infinitely gloomy and hopeless. It was now a reality, full of hope, gladness, and all manner of good. My home had been like a tomb; to-day it was Paradise. My heart had been as though it had not existed; to-day it beat with strength and youth and the certainty of realized happiness. I revelled in the beauty of the world, and called loveliness out of the future to enjoy it before time should bring it to me, as a traveller in the plains looks up to the mountains, and already tastes the cool air through the dust of the road.

Here, I thought, we will live and live for years. There we will sit by the fountain towards evening and in the deep moonlight. Down those paths we will wander together. On those benches we will rest and talk. Among those eastern hills we will ride through the soft twilight, and in the old house we will tell tales on winter nights, when the logs burn high, and the holly berries are red, and the old clock tolls out the dying year. On these old steps, in these dark passages and stately rooms, there will one day be the sound of little pattering feet, and laughing child-voices will ring up to the vaults of the ancient hall. Those tiny footsteps shall not be slow and sad as mine were, nor shall the childish words be spoken in an awed whisper. No gloomy Welsh-woman shall people the dusky corners with weird horrors, nor utter horrid prophecies of death and ghastly things. All shall be young, and fresh, and joyful, and happy, and we will turn the old luck again, and forget that there was ever any sadness.

So I thought, as I looked out of my window that morning and for many mornings after that, and every day it all seemed more real than ever before, and much nearer. But the old nurse looked at me askance, and muttered odd sayings about the Woman of the Water. I cared little what she said, for I was far too happy.

At last the time came near for the wedding. Lady Bluebell and all the tribe of Bluebells, as Margaret called them, were at Bluebell Grange, for we had determined to be married in the country, and to come straight to the Castle after-

wards. We cared little for travelling, and not at all for a crowded ceremony at St. George's in Hanover Square, with all the tiresome formalities afterwards. I used to ride over to the Grange every day, and very often Margaret would come with her aunt and some of her cousins to the Castle. I was suspicious of my own taste, and was only too glad to let her have her way about the alterations and improvements in our home.

We were to be married on the thirtieth of July, and on the evening of the twenty-eighth Margaret drove over with some of the Bluebell party. In the long summer twilight we all went out into the garden. Naturally enough, Margaret and I were left to ourselves, and we wandered down by the marble basins.

"It is an odd coincidence," I said; "it was on this very night last year that I first saw you."

"Considering that it is the month of July," answered Margaret with a laugh, "and that we have been here almost every day, I don't think the coincidence is so extraordinary, after all."

"No, dear," said I, "I suppose not. I don't know why it struck me. We shall very likely be here a year from to-day, and a year from that. The odd thing, when I think of it, is that you should be here at all. But my luck has turned. I ought not to think anything odd that happens now that I have you. It is all sure to be good."

"A slight change in your ideas since that remarkable performance of yours in Paris," said Margaret. "Do you know, I thought you were the most extraordinary man I had ever met."

"I thought you were the most charming woman I had ever seen. I naturally did not want to lose any time in frivolities. I took you at your word, I followed your advice, I asked you to marry me, and this is the delightful result—what's the matter?"

Margaret had started suddenly, and her hand tightened on my arm. An old woman was coming up the path, and was close to us before we saw her, for the moon had risen, and was shining full in our faces. The woman turned out to be my old nurse.

"It's only Judith, dear—don't be frightened," I said. Then I spoke to the Welshwoman: "What are you about, Judith? Have you been feeding the Woman of the Water?"

"Ay—when the clock strikes, Willie—my Lord, I mean," muttered the old creature, drawing aside to let us pass, and fixing her strange eyes on Margaret's face.

"What does she mean?" asked Margaret, when we had gone by.—"Nothing, darling. The old thing is mildly crazy, but she is a good soul."

We went on in silence for a few moments, and came to the rustic bridge just above the artificial grotto through which the water ran out into the park, dark and swift in its narrow channel. We stopped, and leaned on the wooden rail. The moon was now behind us, and shone full upon the long vista of basins and on the huge walls and towers of the Castle above.—"How proud you ought to be of such a grand old place!" said Margaret, softly.

"It is yours now, darling," I answered. "You have as good a right to love it as I—but I only love it because you are to live in it, dear."

Her hand stole out and lay on mine, and we were both silent. Just then the clock began to strike far off in the tower. I counted—eight—nine—ten—eleven—I looked at my watch—twelve—thirteen—I laughed. The bell went on striking.

"The old clock has gone crazy, like Judith," I exclaimed. Still it went on, note after note ringing out monotonously through the still air. We leaned over the rail, instinctively looking in the direction whence the sound came. On and on it went. I counted nearly a hundred, out of sheer curiosity, for I understood that something had broken and that the thing was running itself down.

Suddenly there was a crack as of breaking wood, a cry and a heavy splash, and I was alone, clinging to the broken end of the rail of the rustic bridge.

I do not think I hesitated while my pulse beat twice. I sprang clear of the bridge into the black rushing water, dived to the bottom, came up again with empty hands, turned and swam downward through the grotto in the thick darkness, plunging and diving at every stroke, striking my head and hands against jagged stones and sharp corners, clutching at

last something in my fingers and dragging it up with all my might. I spoke, I cried aloud, but there was no answer. I was alone in the pitchy darkness with my burden, and the house was five hundred yards away. Struggling still, I felt the ground beneath my feet, I saw a ray of moonlight—the grotto widened, and the deep water became a broad and shallow brook as I stumbled over the stones and at last laid Margaret's body on the bank in the park beyond.

"Ay, Willie, as the clock struck!" said the voice of Judith, the Welsh nurse, as she bent down and looked at the white face. The old woman must have turned back and followed us, seen the accident, and slipped out by the lower gate of the garden. "Ay," she groaned, "you have fed the Woman of the Water this night, Willie, while the clock was striking."

I scarcely heard her as I knelt beside the lifeless body of the woman I loved, chafing the wet white temples and gazing wildly into the wide-staring eyes. I remember only the first returning look of consciousness, the first heaving breath, the first movement of those dear hands stretching out towards me.

That is not much of a story, you say. It is the story of my life. That is all. It does not pretend to be anything else. Old Judith says my luck turned on that summer's night when I was struggling in the water to save all that was worth living for. A month later there was a stone bridge above the grotto, and Margaret and I stood on it and looked up at the moonlit Castle, as we had done once before, and as we have done many times since. For all those things happened ten years ago last summer, and this is the tenth Christmas Eve we have spent together by the roaring logs in the old hall, talking of old times; and every year there are more old times to talk of. There are curly-headed boys, too, with red-gold hair and dark-brown eyes like their mother's, and a little Margaret, with solemn black eyes like mine. Why could not she look like her mother, too, as well as the rest of them?

The world is very bright at this glorious Christmas time, and perhaps there is little use in calling up the sadness of

long ago, unless it be to make the jolly fire-light seem more cheerful, the good wife's face look gladder, and to give the children's laughter a merrier ring, by contrast with all that is gone. Perhaps, too, some sad faced, listless, melancholy youth, who feels that the world is very hollow, and that life is like a perpetual funeral service, just as I used to feel myself, may take courage from my example, and having found the woman of his heart, ask her to marry him after half an hour's acquaintance. But, on the whole, I would not advise any man to marry, for the simple reason that no man will ever find a wife like mine, and being obliged to go farther, he will necessarily fare worse. My wife has done miracles, but I will not assert that any other woman is able to follow her example.

Margaret always said that the old place was beautiful, and that I ought to be proud of it. I dare say she is right. She has even more imagination than I. But I have a good answer and a plain one, which is this,—that all the beauty of the Castle comes from her. She has breathed upon it all, as the children blow upon the cold glass window-panes in winter; and as their warm breath crystallizes into landscapes from fairyland, full of exquisite shapes and traceries upon the blank surface, so her spirit has transformed every gray stone of the old towers, every ancient tree and hedge in the gardens, every thought in my once melancholy self. All that was old is young, and all that was sad is glad, and I am the gladdest of all. Whatever heaven may be, there is no earthly paradise without woman, nor is there anywhere a place so desolate, so dreary, so unutterably miserable that a woman cannot make it seem heaven to the man she loves and who loves her.

I hear certain cynics laugh, and cry that all that has been said before. Do not laugh, my good cynic. You are too small a man to laugh at such a great thing as love. Prayers have been said before now by many, and perhaps you say yours, too. I do not think they lose anything by being repeated, nor you by repeating them. You say that the world is bitter, and full of the Waters of Bitterness. Love, and so live that you may be loved—the world will turn sweet for you, and you shall rest like me by the Waters of Paradise.

A MEMORABLE NIGHT

BY ANNA KATHARINE GREEN

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I

I AM a young physician of limited practice and great ambition. At the time of the incidents I am about to relate, my office was in a respectable house in Twenty-fourth Street, New York City, and was shared, greatly to my own pleasure and convenience, by a clever young German whose acquaintance I had made in the hospital, and to whom I had become, in the one short year in which we had practised together, most unreasonably attached. I say unreasonably, because it was a liking for which I could not account even to myself, as he was neither especially prepossessing in appearance nor gifted with any too great amiability of character. He was, however, a brilliant theorist and an unquestionably trustworthy practitioner, and for these reasons probably I entertained for him a profound respect, and as I have already said a hearty and spontaneous affection.

As our specialties were the same, and as, moreover, they were of a nature which did not call for night-work, we usually spent the evening together. But once I failed to join him at the office, and it is of this night I have to tell.

I had been over to Orange, for my heart was sore over the quarrel I had had with Dora, and I was resolved to make one final effort towards reconciliation. But alas for my hopes, she was not at home; and, what was worse, I soon learned that she was going to sail the next morning for Europe. This news, coming as it did without warning, affected me seriously, for I knew if she escaped from my influence at this time, I should certainly lose her forever; for the gentleman concerning whom we had quarrelled, was a much better match for her than I, and almost equally in love. However, her father, who had always been my friend,

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did not look upon this same gentleman's advantages with as favorable an eye as she did, and when he heard I was in the house, he came hurrying into my presence, with excitement written in every line of his fine face.

"Ah, Dick, my boy," he exclaimed joyfully, "how opportune this is! I was wishing you would come, for, do you know, Appleby has taken passage on board the same steamer as Dora, and if he and she cross together, they will certainly come to an understanding, and that will not be fair to you, or pleasing to me; and I do not care who knows it!"

I gave him one look and sank, quite overwhelmed, into the seat nearest me. Appleby was the name of my rival, and I quite agreed with her father that the tête-à-têtes afforded by an ocean voyage would surely put an end to the hopes which I had so long and secretly cherished.

"Does she know he is going? Did she encourage him?" I stammered.

But the old man answered genially: "Oh, she knows, but I cannot say anything positive about her having encouraged him. The fact is, Dick, she still holds a soft place in her heart for you, and if you were going to be of the party——"

"Well?"

"I think you would come off conqueror yet."

"Then I will be of the party," I cried. "It is only six now, and I can be in New York by seven. That gives me five hours before midnight, time enough in which to arrange my plans, see Richter, and make everything ready for sailing in the morning."

"Dick, you are a trump!" exclaimed the gratified father. "You have a spirit I like, and if Dora does not like it too, then I am mistaken in her good sense. But can you leave your patients?"

"Just now I have but one patient who is in anything like a critical condition," I replied, "and her case Richter understands almost as well as I do myself. I will have to see her this evening of course and explain, but there is time for that if I go now. The steamer sails at nine?"

"Precisely."

"Do not tell Dora that I expect to be there; let her be surprised. Dear girl, she is quite well, I hope?"

"Yes, very well; only going over with her aunt to do some shopping. A poor outlook for a struggling physician, you think. Well, I don't know about that; she is just the kind of a girl to go from one extreme to another. If she once loves you she will not care any longer about Paris fashions."

"She shall love me," I cried, and left him in a great hurry, to catch the first train for Hoboken.

It seemed wild, this scheme, but I determined to pursue it. I loved Dora too much to lose her, and if three weeks' absence would procure me the happiness of my life, why should I hesitate to avail myself of the proffered opportunity? I rode on air as the express I had taken shot from station to station, and by the time I had arrived at Christopher Street Ferry my plans were all laid and my time disposed of till midnight.

It was therefore with no laggard step I hurried to my office, nor was it with any ordinary feelings of impatience that I found Richter out; for this was not his usual hour for absenting himself and I had much to tell him and many advices to give. It was the first balk I had received and I was fuming over it, when I saw what looked like a package of books lying on the table before me, and though it was addressed to my partner, I was about to take it up, when I heard my name uttered in a tremulous tone, and turning, saw a man standing in the doorway, who, the moment I met his eye, advanced into the room and said:

"O doctor, I have been waiting for you an hour. Mrs. Warner has been taken very bad, sir, and she prays that you will not delay a moment before coming to her. It is something serious, I fear, and she may have died already, for she would have no one else but you, and it is now an hour since I left her."

"And who are you?" I asked, for though I knew Mrs. Warner well—she is the patient to whom I have already referred—I did not know her messenger.

"I am a servant in the house where she was taken ill."

"Then she is not at home?"

"No, sir, she is in Second Avenue."

"I am very sorry," I began, "but I have not the time——"

But he interrupted eagerly: "There is a carriage at

the door; we thought you might not have your phaeton ready."

I had noticed the carriage. "Very well," said I. "I will go, but first let me write a line——"

"O sir," the man broke in pleadingly, "do not wait for anything. She is really very bad, and I heard her calling for you as I ran out of the house."

"She had her voice, then?" I ventured, somewhat distrustful of the whole thing and yet not knowing how to refuse the man, especially as it was absolutely necessary for me to see Mrs. Warner that night and get her consent to my departure before I could think of making further plans.

So, leaving word for Richter to be sure and wait for me if he came home before I did, I signified to Mrs. Warner's messenger that I was ready to go with him, and immediately took a seat in the carriage which had been provided for me. The man at once jumped up on the box beside the driver, and before I could close the carriage door we were off, riding rapidly down Seventh Avenue.

As we went the thought came, "What if Mrs. Warner will not let me off!" But I dismissed the fear at once, for this patient of mine is an extremely unselfish woman, and if she were not too ill to grasp the situation, would certainly sympathize with the strait I was in and consent to accept Richter's services in place of my own, especially as she knows and trusts him.

When the carriage stopped it was already dark and I could distinguish little of the house I entered, save that it was large and old and did not look like an establishment where a man servant would be likely to be kept.

"Is Mrs. Warner here?" I asked of the man who was slowly getting down from the box.

"Yes, sir," he answered quickly; and I was about to ring the bell before me, when the door opened and a young German girl, courtesying slightly, welcomed me in, saying:

"Mrs. Warner is upstairs, sir; in the front room, if you please."

Not doubting her, but greatly astonished at the barren aspect of the place I was in, I stumbled up the faintly lighted stairs before me and entered the great front room. It was

empty, but through an open door at the other end I heard a voice saying: "He has come, madam;" and anxious to see my patient, whose presence in this desolate house I found it harder and harder to understand, I stepped into the room where she presumably lay.

Alas! for my temerity in doing so; for no sooner had I crossed the threshold than the door by which I had entered closed with a click unlike any I had ever heard before, and when I turned to see what it meant, another click came from the opposite side of the room, and I perceived, with a benumbed sense of wonder, that the one person whose somewhat shadowy figure I had encountered on entering had vanished from the place, and that I was shut up alone in a room without visible means of egress.

This was startling, and hard to believe at first, but after I had tried the door by which I had entered and found it securely locked, and then bounding to the other side of the room, tried the opposite one with the same result, I could not but acknowledge I was caught. What did it mean? Caught, and I was in haste, mad haste. Filling the room with my cries, I shouted for help and a quick release, but my efforts were naturally fruitless, and after exhausting myself in vain I stood still and surveyed, with what equanimity was left me, the appearance of the dreary place in which I had thus suddenly become entrapped.

II

It was a small square room, and I shall not soon forget with what a foreboding shudder I observed that its four blank walls were literally unbroken by a single window, for this told me that I was in no communication with the street, and that it would be impossible for me to summon help from the outside world. The single gas jet burning in a fixture hanging from the ceiling was the only relief given to the eye in the blank expanse of white wall that surrounded me; while as to furniture, the room could boast of nothing more than an old-fashioned black-walnut table and two chairs, the latter cushioned, but stiff in the back and generally dilapi-

dated in appearance. The only sign of comfort about me was a tray that stood on the table, containing a couple of bottles of wine and two glasses. The bottles were full and the glasses clean, and to add to this appearance of hospitality a box of cigars rested invitingly near, which I could not fail to perceive, even at the first glance, were of the very best brand.

Astonished at these tokens of consideration for my welfare, and confounded by the prospect which they offered of a lengthy stay in this place, I gave another great shout; but to no better purpose than before. Not a voice answered, and not a stir was heard in the house. But there came from without the faint sound of suddenly moving wheels, as if the carriage which I had left standing before the door had slowly rolled away. If this were so, then was I indeed a prisoner, while the moments so necessary to my plans, and perhaps to the securing of my whole future happiness, were flying by like the wind. As I realized this, and my own utter helplessness, I fell into one of the chairs before me in a state of perfect despair. Not that any fears for my life were disturbing me, though one in my situation might well question if he would ever again breathe the open air from which he had been so ingeniously lured. I did not in that first moment of utter downheartedness so much as inquire the reason for the trick which had been played upon me. No, my heart was full of Dora, and I was asking myself if I were destined to lose her after all, and that through no lack of effort on my part, but just because a party of thieves or blackmailers had thought fit to play a game with my liberty.

It could not be; there must be some mistake about it; it was some great joke, or I was the victim of a dream, or suffering from some hideous nightmare. Why, only a half hour before I was in my own office, among my own familiar belongings, and now—— But, alas, it was no delusion. Only four blank, whitewashed walls met my inquiring eyes, and though I knocked and knocked again upon the two doors which guarded me on either side, hollow echoes continued to be the only answer I received.

Had the carriage then taken away the two persons I had seen in this house, and was I indeed alone in its great empti-

ness? The thought made me desperate, but notwithstanding this I was resolved to continue my efforts, for I might be mistaken; there might yet be some being left who would yield to my entreaties if they were backed by something substantial.

Taking out my watch, I laid it on the table; it was just a quarter to eight. Then I emptied my trousers pockets of whatever money they held, and when all was heaped up before me, I could count but twelve dollars, which, together with my studs and a seal ring which I wore, seemed a paltry pittance with which to barter for the liberty of which I had been robbed. But it was all I had with me, and I was willing to part with it at once if only some one would unlock the door and let me go. But how to make known my wishes even if there was any one to listen to them? I had already called in vain, and there was no bell—yes, there was; why had I not seen it before? There was a bell and I sprang to ring it. But just as my hand fell on the cord, I heard a gentle voice behind my back saying in good English, but with a strong foreign accent:

"Put up your money, Mr. Atwater; we do not want your money, only your society. Allow me to beg you to replace both watch and money."

Wheeling about in my double surprise at the presence of this intruder and his unexpected acquaintance with my name, I encountered the smiling glance of a middle-aged man of genteel appearance and courteous manners. He was bowing almost to the ground, and was, as I instantly detected, of German birth and education, a gentleman, and not a blackleg I had every reason to expect to see.

"You have made a slight mistake," he was saying; "it is your society, only your society, that we want."

Astonished at his appearance, and exceedingly irritated by his words, I stepped back as he offered me my watch, and bluntly cried:

"If it is my society only that you want, you have certainly taken very strange means to procure it. A thief could have set no neater trap, and if it is money you want, state your sum and let me go, for my time is valuable and my society likely to be unpleasant."

He gave a shrug with his shoulders that in no wise interfered with his set smile.

"You choose to be facetious," he observed. "I have already remarked that we have no use for your money. Will you sit down? Here is some excellent wine, and if this brand of cigars does not suit you, I will send for another."

"Send for the devil!" I cried, greatly exasperated. "What do you mean by keeping me in this place against my will? Open that door and let me out, or——"

I was ready to spring and he saw it. Smiling more atrociously than ever, he slipped behind the table, and before I could reach him, had quietly drawn a pistol, which he cocked before my eyes.

"You are excited," he remarked, with a suavity that nearly drove me mad. "Now excitement is no aid to good company, and I am determined that none but good company shall be in this room to-night. So if you will be kind enough to calm yourself, Mr. Atwater, you and I may yet enjoy ourselves, but if not—" the action he made was significant, and I felt the cold sweat break out on my forehead through all the heat of my indignation.

But I did not mean to show him that he had intimidated me.

"Excuse me," said I, "and put down your pistol. Though you are making me lose irredeemable time, I will try and control myself enough to give you an opportunity for explaining yourself. Why have you entrapped me into this place?"

"I have already told you," said he, gently laying the pistol before him, but within easy reach of his hand.

"But that is preposterous," I began, fast losing my self-control again. "You do not know me, and if you did——"

"Pardon me, you see I know your name."

Yes, that was true, and the fact set me thinking. How did he know my name? I did not know him, nor did I know this house, or any reason for which I could have been beguiled into it. Was I the victim of a conspiracy, or was the man mad? Looking at him very earnestly, I declared:

"My name is Atwater, and so far you are right, but in learning that much about me you must also have learned

that I am neither rich nor influential, nor of any special value to a blackmailer. Why choose me out then for—your society? Why not choose some one who can—talk?"

"I find your conversation very interesting."

Baffled, exasperated almost beyond the power to restrain myself, I shook my fist in his face, notwithstanding I saw his hand fly to his pistol.

"Let me go!" I shrieked. "Let me go out of this place. I have business, I tell you, important business which means everything to me, and which, if I do not attend to it to-night, will be lost to me forever. Let me go, and I will so far reward you that I will speak to no one of what has taken place here to-night, but go my ways, forgetful of you, forgetful of this house, forgetful of all connected with it."

"You are very good," was his quiet reply, "but this wine has to be drunk." And he calmly poured out a glass, while I drew back in despair. "You do not drink wine?" he queried, holding up the glass he had filled between himself and the light. "It is a pity, for it is of most rare vintage. But perhaps you smoke?"

Sick and disgusted, I found a chair, and sat down in it. If the man were crazy, there was certainly method in his madness. Besides, he had not a crazy eye; there was calm calculation in it and not a little good-nature. Did he simply want to detain me, and if so, did he have a motive it would pay me to fathom before I exerted myself further to insure my release? Answering the wave he made me with his hand by reaching out for the bottle and filling myself a glass, I forced myself to speak more affably as I remarked:

"If the wine must be drunk, we had better be about it, as you can not mean to detain me more than an hour, whatever reason you may have for wishing my society."

He looked at me inquiringly before answering, then tossing off his glass, he remarked:

"I am sorry, but in an hour a man can scarcely make the acquaintance of another man's exterior."

"Then you mean——"

"To know you thoroughly, if you will be so good; I may never have the opportunity again."

He must be mad; nothing else but mania could account

for such words and such actions; and yet, if mad, why was he allowed to enter my presence? The man who brought me here, the woman who received me at the door, had not been mad.

"And I must stay here——" I began.

"Till I am quite satisfied. I am afraid that will take till morning."

I gave a cry of despair, and then in my utter desperation spoke up to him as I would to a man of feeling:

"You don't know what you are doing; you don't know what I shall suffer by any such cruel detention. This night is not like other nights to me. This is a special night in my life, and I need it, I need it, I tell you, to spend as I will. The woman I love"—it seemed horrible to speak of her in this place, but I was wild at my helplessness, and madly hoped I might awake some answering chord in a breast which could not be void of all feeling or he would not have that benevolent look in his eye—"the woman I love," I repeated, "sails for Europe to-morrow. We have quarrelled, but she still cares for me, and if I can sail on the same steamer, we will yet make up and be happy."

"At what time does this steamer start?"

"At nine in the morning."

"Well, you shall leave this house at eight. If you go directly to the steamer you will be in time."

"But—but," I panted, "I have made no arrangements. I shall have to go to my lodgings, write letters, get money. I ought to be there at this moment. Have you no mercy on a man who never did you wrong, and only asks to quit you and forget the precious hour you have made him lose?"

"I am sorry" he said, "it is certainly quite unfortunate, but the door will not be opened before eight. There is really no one in the house to unlock it."

"And do you mean to say," I cried aghast, "that you could not open that door if you would, that you are locked in here as well as I, and that I must remain here till morning, no matter how I feel or you feel?"

"Will you not take a cigar?" he asked.

Then I began to see how useless it was to struggle, and visions of Dora leaning on the steamer rail with that ser-

pent whispering soft entreaties in her ear came rushing before me, till I could have wept in my jealous chagrin.

"It is cruel, base, devilish," I began. "If you had the excuse of wanting money, and took this method of wringing my all from me, I could have patience, but to entrap and keep me here for nothing, when my whole future happiness is trembling in the balance, is the work of a fiend and——" I made a sudden pause, for a strange idea had struck me.

III

What if this man, these men and this woman, were in league with him whose rivalry I feared, and whom I had intended to supplant on the morrow. It was a wild surmise, but was it any wilder than to believe I was held here for a mere whim, a freak, a joke, as this bowing, smiling man before me would have me believe?

Rising in fresh excitement, I struck my hand on the table. "You want to keep me from going on the steamer," I cried. "That other wretch who loves her has paid you——"

But that other wretch could not know that I was meditating any such unusual scheme, as following him without a full day's warning. I thought of this even before I had finished my sentence, and did not need the blank astonishment in the face of the man before me to convince me that I had given utterance to a foolish accusation. "It would have been some sort of a motive for your actions," I humbly added, as I sank back from my hostile attitude; "now you have none."

I thought he bestowed upon me a look of quiet pity, but if so he soon hid it with his uplifted glass.

"Forget the girl," said he; "I know of a dozen just as pretty."

I was too indignant to answer.

"Women are the bane of life," he now sententiously exclaimed. "They are ever intruding themselves between a man and his comfort, as for instance just now between yourself and this good wine."

I caught up the bottle in sheer desperation.

"Don't talk of them," I cried, "and I will try and drink. I almost wish there was poison in the glass. My death here might bring punishment upon you."

He shook his head, totally unmoved by my passion.

"We deal punishment, not receive it. It would not worry me in the least to leave you lying here upon the floor."

I did not believe this, but I did not stop to weigh the question then; I was too much struck by a word he had used.

"Deal punishment?" I repeated. "Are you punishing me? Is that why I am here?"

He laughed and held out his glass to mine.

"You enjoy being sarcastic," he observed. "Well, it gives a spice to conversation, I own. Talk is apt to be dull without it."

For reply I struck the glass from his hand; it fell and shivered, and he looked for the moment really distressed.

"I had rather you had struck me," he remarked, "for I have an answer for an injury like that; but for a broken glass——" He sighed and looked dolefully at the pieces on the floor.

Mortified and somewhat ashamed, I put down my own glass.

"You should not have exasperated me," I cried, and walked away beyond temptation, to the other side of the room.

His spirits had received a dampener, but in a few minutes he seized upon a cigar and began smoking; as the wreaths curled over his head he began to talk, and this time it was on subjects totally foreign to myself and even to himself. It was good talk; that I recognized, though I hardly listened to what he said. I was asking myself what time it had now got to be, and what was the meaning of my incarceration, till my brain became weary and I could scarcely distinguish the topic he discussed. But he kept on for all my seeming, and indeed real, indifference, kept on hour after hour in a monologue he endeavored to make interesting, and which probably would have been so if the time and occasion had been fit for my enjoying it. As it was, I had no ear for his choicest phrases, his subtlest criticisms, or his most philo-

sophic disquisitions. I was wrapped up in self and my cruel disappointment, and when in a certain access of frenzy I leaped to my feet and took a look at the watch still lying on the table, and saw it was four o'clock in the morning, I gave a bound of final despair, and throwing myself on the floor, gave myself up to the heavy sleep that mercifully came to relieve me.

I was roused by feeling a touch on my breast. Clapping my hand to the spot where I had felt the intruding hand, I discovered that my watch had been returned to my pocket. Drawing it out I first looked at it and then cast my eyes quickly about the room. There was no one with me, and the doors stood open between me and the hall. It was eight o'clock, as my watch had just told me.

That I rushed from the house and took the shortest road to the steamer, goes without saying. I could not cross the ocean with Dora, but I might yet see her and tell her how near I came to giving her my company on that long voyage which now would only serve to further the ends of my rival. But when, after torturing delays on cars and ferry-boats, and incredible efforts to pierce a throng that was equally determined not to be pierced, I at last reached the wharf, it was to behold her, just as I had fancied in my wildest moments, leaning on a rail of the ship and listening, while she abstractedly waved her hand to some friends below, to the words of the man who had never looked so handsome to me or so odious as at this moment of his unconscious triumph. Her father was near her, and from his eager attitude and rapidly wandering gaze I saw that he was watching for me. At last he spied me struggling aboard, and immediately his face lighted up in a way which made me wish he had not thought it necessary to wait for my anticipated meeting with his daughter.

"Ah, Dick, you are late," he began, effusively, as I put foot on deck.

But I waved him back and went at once to Dora.

"Forgive me, pardon me," I incoherently said, as her sweet eyes rose in startled pleasure to mine. "I would have brought you flowers, but I meant to sail with you, Dora, I tried to—but wretches, villains, prevented it and—and——"

"Oh, it does not matter," she said, and then blushed, probably because the words sounded unkind, "I mean——"

But she could not say what she meant, for just then the bell rang for all visitors to leave, and her father came forward, evidently thinking all was right between us, smiled benignantly in her face, gave her a kiss and me a wink and disappeared in the crowd that was now rapidly going ashore.

I felt that I must follow, but I gave her one look and one squeeze of the hand, and then, as I saw her glances wander to his face, I groaned in spirit, stammered some words of choking sorrow and was gone, before her embarrassment would let her speak words, which I knew would only add to my grief and make this hasty parting unendurable.

The look of amazement and chagrin with which her father met my reappearance on the dock can easily be imagined.

"Why, Dick," he exclaimed, "aren't you going after all? I thought I could rely on you. Where's your pluck, lad? Scared off by a frown? I wouldn't have believed it, Dick. What if she does frown to-day; she will smile to-morrow."

I shook my head; I could not tell him just then that it was not through any lack of pluck on my part that I had failed him.

When I left the dock I went straight to a restaurant for I was faint as well as miserable. But my cup of coffee choked me and the rolls and eggs were more than I could face. Rising impatiently I went out. Was any one more wretched than I that morning and could any one nourish a more bitter grievance? As I strode towards my lodgings I chewed the cud of my disappointment till my wrongs loomed up like mountains and I was seized by a spirit of revenge. Should I let such an interference as I had received go unpunished? No, if the wretch who had detained me was not used to punishment he should receive a specimen of it now and from a man who was no longer a prisoner, and who once aroused did not easily forego his purposes. Turning aside from my former destination, I went immediately to a police-station and when I had entered my complaint was astonished to see that all the officials had grouped about me

and were listening to my words with the most startled interest.

"Was the man who came for you a German?" one asked.

"I said 'Yes.'"

"And the man who stood guardian over you and entertained you with wine and cigars, was not he a German too?"

I nodded acquiescence and they at once began to whisper together; then one of them advanced to me and said:

"You have not been home, I understand; you had better come."

Astonished by his manner I endeavored to inquire what he meant, but he drew me away, and not till we were within a stone's throw of my office did he say, "You must prepare yourself for a shock. The impertinences you suffered from last night were unpleasant no doubt, but if you had been allowed to return home, you might not now be deploring them in comparative peace and safety."

"What do you mean?"

"That your partner was not as fortunate as yourself. Look up at the house; what do you see there?"

A crowd was what I saw first, but he made me look higher, and then I perceived that the windows of my room, of our room, were shattered and blackened and that part of the casement of one had been blown out.

"A fire!" I shrieked. "Poor Richter was smoking——"

"No he was not smoking. He had no time for a smoke. An infernal machine burst in that room last night and your friend was its wretched victim."

I never knew why my friend's life was made a sacrifice to the revenge of his fellow-countrymen. Though we had been intimate in the year we had been together, he had never talked to me of his country and I had never seen him in company with one of his own nation. But that he was the victim of some political revenge was apparent, for though it proved impossible to find the man who had detained me, the house was found and ransacked, and amongst other secret things was discovered the model of the machine which had been introduced into our room, and which had proved so fatal to the man it was addressed to. Why men who were so re-

lentless in their purposes towards him should have taken such pains to keep me from sharing his fate, is one of those anomalies in human nature which now and then awake our astonishment. If I had not lost Dora through my detention at their hands I should look back upon that evening with sensations of thankfulness. As it is, I sometimes question if it would not have been better if they had let me take my chances.

* * * * * *

Have I lost Dora? From a letter I received to-day I begin to think not.

THE MAN FROM RED DOG

BY ALFRED HENRY LEWIS

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"LET me try one of them thar seegyars."

It was the pleasant after-dinner hour, and I was on the veranda for a quiet smoke. The Old Cattleman had just thrown down his paper; the half-light of the waning sun was a bit too dim for his eyes of seventy years.

"Whenever I behold a seegyar," said the old fellow, as he puffed voluminously at the principe I passed over, "I thinks of what that witness says in the murder trial at Socorro.

"'What was you-all doin' in camp yourse'f,' asked the jedge of this yere witness, 'the day of the killin'?'

"'Which,' says the witness, oncrossin' his laigs an' lettin' on he ain't made bashful an' oneasy by so much attentions bein' shown him, 'which I was a-eatin' of a few sardines, a-drinkin' of a few drinks of whiskey, a-smokin' of a few seegyars, an' a-romancin' 'round.'"

After this abrupt, not to say ambiguous reminiscence, the Old Cattleman puffed contentedly a moment.

"What murder trial was this you speak of?" I asked. "Who had been killed?"

"Now I don't reckon I ever does know who it is gets downed," he replied. "This yere murder trial itse'f is news to me complete. They was waggin' along with it when I trails into Socorro that time, an' I merely sa'nters over to the co't that a-way to hear what's goin' on. The jedge is sorter gettin' in on the play while I'm listenin'.

"'What was the last words of this yere gent who's killed?' asked the jedge of this witness.

"'As nearly as I keeps tabs, jedge,' says the witness, 'the dyin' statement of this person is: "Four aces to beat."'

"'Which if deceased had knowed Socorro like I does,'

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says the jedge, like he's commentin' to himse'f, 'he'd shorely realized that sech remarks is simply sooicidal.'"

Again the Old Cattleman relapsed into silence and the smoke of the principe.

"How did the trial come out?" I queried. "Was the accused found guilty?"

"Which the trial itse'f," he replied, "don't come out. Thar's a passel of the boys who's come into town to see that jestice is done, an' bein' the round-up is goin' for'ard at the time, they nacherally feels hurried an' pressed for leesure. They-alls oughter be back on the range with their cattle. So the fifth day, when things is loiterin' along at the trial till it looks like the law has hobbles on, an' the word goes round it's goin' to be a week yet before the jury gets action on this miscreant who's bein' tried, the boys becomes plumb aggravated an' wearied out that a-way; an', kickin' in the door of the calaboose, they searches out the felon, swings him to a cottonwood not otherwise engaged, an' the right prevails. Nacherally the trial bogs down right thar."

After another season of silence and smoke, the Old Cattleman struck in again.

"Speakin' of killin's, while I'm the last gent to go fosterin' idees of bloodshed, I'm some discouraged jest now by what I've been readin' in that paper about a dooel between some Eytalians, an' it shorely tries me the way them aliens plays hoss. It's obvious as stars on a cl'ar night, they never means fight a little bit. I abhors dooels, an' cowers from the mere idee. But, after all, business is business, an' when folks fights 'em the objects of the meetin' oughter be blood. But the way these yere European shorthorns fixes it, a gent shorely runs a heap more resk of becomin' a angel abrupt, attendin' of a Texas cake-walk in a purely social way.

"Do they ever fight dooels in the West? Why, yes—some. My mem'ry comes a canterin' up right now with the details of an encounter I once beholds in Wolfville. Thar ain't no time much throwed away with a dooel in the Southwest. The people's mighty extemporaneous, an' don't go browsin' 'round none sendin' challenges in writin', an' that sort of flapdoodle. When a gent notices the signs a-gettin' about right for him to go on the war-path, he picks out his

meat, surges up, an' declar's himse'f. The victim, who is most likely a mighty serious an' experienced person, don't copper the play by makin' vain remarks, but brings his gatlin' into play surprisin'. Next it's bang! bang! bang! mixed up with flashes an' white smoke, an' the dooel is over complete. The gent who still adorns our midst takes a drink on the house, while St. Peter onbars things a lot an' arranges gate an' seat checks with the other in the realms of light. That's all thar is to it. The tide of life ag'in flows onward to the eternal sea, an' nary ripple.

"Oh, this yere Wolfville dooel! Well, it's this a-way. The day is blazin' hot, an' business layin' prone an' dead—jest blistered to death. A passel of us is sorter pervadin' round the dance-hall, it bein' the biggest an' coolest store in camp. A monte game is strugglin' for breath in a feeble, fitful way in a corner, an' some of us is a-watchin'; an' some a-settin' 'round loose a-thinkin'; but all keepin' mum an' still, 'cause it's so hot.

"Jest then some gent on a hoss goes whoopin' up the street a-yellin' an' a-whirlin' the loop of his rope, an' allowin' generally he's havin' a mighty good time.

"'Who's this yere toomultuous man on the hoss?' says Enright, a-regardin' of him in a displeased way from the door.

"'I meets him up the street a minute back,' says Dan Boggs, 'an' he allows he's called "The Man from Red Dog." He says he's took a day off to visit us, an' aims to lay waste the camp some before he goes back.'

"About then the Red Dog man notes old Santa Rosa, who keeps the Mexican *baile* hall, an' his old woman, Marie, a-fussin' with each other in front of the New York Store. They's locked horns over a drink or somethin', an' is pow-wowin' mighty onamiable.

"'Whatever does this yere Mexican fam'ly mean,' says the Red Dog man, a-surveyin' of 'em plenty scornful, 'a-draggin' of their domestic brawls out yere to offend a sufferin' public for? Whyever don't they stay in their wickeyup an' fight, an' not take to puttin' it all over the American race which ain't in the play none an' don't thirst tharfor? However, I unites an' reeconciles this divided household easy.'

"With this the Red Dog man drops the loop of his lariat 'round the two contestants an' jumps his bronco up the street like it's come outen a gun. Of course Santa Rosa an' Marie goes along on their heads permiscus.

"They goes coastin' along ontil they gets pulled into a mesquite-bush, an' the rope slips offen the saddle, an' thar they be. We-alls goes over from the dance-hall, extricatin' of 'em, an' final they round up mighty hapless an' weak, an' can only walk. They shorely lose enough hide to make a pair of leggin's.

"'Which I brings 'em together like twins,' says the Red Dog man, ridin' back for his rope. 'I offers two to one, no limit, they don't fight none whatever for a month.'

"Which, as it shorely looks like he's right, no one takes him. So the Red Dog man leaves his bluff a-hangin' an' goes into the dance-hall, a-givin' of it out cold an' clammy he meditates libatin'.

"'All promenade to the bar,' yells the Red Dog man as he goes in. 'I'm a wolf, an' it's my night to howl. Don't 'rouse me, barkeep, with the sight of merely one bottle; set 'em all up. I'm some fastidious about my fire-water an' likes chance to select.'

"Well, we-alls takes our inspiration, an' the Red Dog man tucks his onder his belt an' then turns round to Enright.

"'I takes it you're the old he-coon of this yere outfit?' says the Red Dog man, soopercilious-like.

"'Which, if I ain't,' says Enright, 'it's plenty safe as a play to let your wisdom flow this a-way till the he-coon gets yere.'

"'If thar's anythin',' says the Red Dog man, 'I turns from sick, it's voylence an' deevastation. But I hears such complaints constant of this yere camp of Wolfville, I takes my first idle day to ride over an' line things up. Now yere I be, an' while I regrets it, I finds you-alls is a lawless, onregenerate set, a heap sight worse than roomer. I now takes the notion—for I sees no other trail—that by next drink time I climbs into the saddle, throws my rope 'round this den of sin, an' removes it from the map.'

"'Nacherally,' says Enright, some sarcastic, 'in makin'

them schemes you ain't lookin' for no trouble whatever with a band of tarrapins like us.'

"'None whatever,' says the Red Dog man, mighty confident. 'In thirty minutes I distributes this yere hamlet 'round in the landscape same as them Greasers; which feat becomin' hist'ry, I then canters back to Red Dog.'

"'Well,' says Enright, 'it's plenty p'lite to let us know what's comin' this a-way.'

"'Oh! I ain't tellin' you none,' says the Red Dog man, 'I simply lets fly this hint, so any of you-alls as has got bric-à-brac he values speshul, he takes warnin' some an' packs it off all safe.'

"It's about then when Cherokee Hall, who's lookin' on, shoulders in between Enright an' the Red Dog man, mighty positive. Cherokee is a heap sot in his idees, an' I sees right off he's took a notion ag'in the Red Dog man.

"'As you've got a lot of work cut out,' says Cherokee, eyein' the Red Dog man malignant, 's'pose we tips the canteen ag'in.'

"'I shorely goes you,' says the Red Dog man. 'I drinks with friend, an' I drinks with foe; with the pard of my bosom an' the shudderin' victim of my wrath all sim'lar.'

"Cherokee turns out a big drink an' stands a-holdin' of it in his hand. I wants to say right yere, this Cherokee's plenty guileful.

"'You was namin',' says Cherokee, 'some public improvements you aims to make; sech as movin' this yere camp 'round some, I believes?'

"'That's whatever,' says the Red Dog man, 'an' the holycaust I 'nitiates is due to start in fifteen minutes.'

"'I've been figgerin' on you,' says Cherokee, 'an' I gives you the result in strict confidence without holdin' out a kyard. When you-all talks of tearin' up Wolfville, you're a liar an' hoss-thief, an' you ain't goin' to tear up nothin'.'

"'What's this I hears!' yells the frenzied Red Dog man, reachin' for his gun.

"But he never gets it, for the same second Cherokee spills the glass of whiskey straight in his eyes, an' the next he's anguished an' blind as a mole.

"'I'll fool this yere human simoon up a lot,' says Chero-

kee, a-hurlin' of the Red Dog man to the floor, face down, while his nine-inch bowie shines in his hand like the sting of a wasp. 'I shore fixes him so he can't get a job clerkin' in a store,' an' grabbin' the Red Dog man's ha'r, which is long as the mane of a pony, he slashes it off close in one motion.

"'Thar's a fringe for your leggin's, Nell,' remarks Cherokee, a-turnin' of the crop over to Faro Nell. 'Now, Doc,' Cherokee goes on to Doc Peets, 'take this yere Red Dog stranger over to the Red Light, fix his eyes all right, an' then tell him, if he thinks he needs blood in this, to take his Winchester an' go north in the middle of the street. In twenty minutes by the watch I steps outen the dance-hall door a-lookin' for him. P'int him to the door all fair an' squar'. I don't aim to play nothin' low on this yere gent. He gets a chance for his ante.'

"Doc Peets sorter accoomilates the Red Dog man, who is cussin' an' carryin' on scand'lous, an' leads him over to the Red Light. In a minute word comes to Cherokee as his eyes is roundin' up all proper, an' that he's makin' war-medicine an' is growin' more hostile constant, an' to heel himse'f. At that Cherokee, mighty ca'm, sends out for Jack Moore's Winchester, which is an 'eight-squar',' latest model.

"'Oh, Cherokee!' says Faro Nell, beginnin' to cry, an' curlin' her arms 'round his neck. 'I'm 'fraid he's goin' to down you. Ain't thar no way to fix it? Can't Dan yere settle with this Red Dog man?'

"'Cert,' says Dan Boggs, 'an' I makes the trip too gleeful. Jest to spar' Nell's feelin's, Cherokee, an' not to interfere with no gent's little game, I takes your hand an' plays it.'

"'Not none,' says Cherokee; 'this is my deal. Don't cry, Nellie,' he adds, smoothin' down her yaller ha'r. 'Folks in my business has to hold themse'fs ready to face any game on the word, an' they never weakens or lays down. An' another thing, little girl; I gets this Red Dog sharp shore. I'm in the middle of a run of luck; I holds fours twice last night, with a flush an' a full hand out ag'in 'em.'

"Nell at last lets go of Cherokee's neck, an', bein' a female an' timid that a-way, allows she'll go, an' won't stop to see the shootin' none. We applauds the idee, thinkin'

she might shake Cherokee some if she stays; an' of course a gent out shootin' for his life needs his nerve.

"Well, the twenty minutes is up; the Red Dog man gets his rifle offen his saddle an' goes down the middle of the street. Turnin' up his big sombrero, he squar's 'round, cocks his gun, an' waits. Then Enright goes out with Cherokee an' stands him in the street about a hundred yards from the Red Dog man. After Cherokee's placed he holds up his hand for attention an' says:

"'When all is ready I stands to one side an' drops my hat. You-alls fires at will.'

"Enright goes over to the side of the street, counts 'one,' 'two,' 'three,' an' drops his hat. Bangety! Bang! Bang! goes the rifles like the roll of a drum. Cherokee can work a Winchester like one of these yere Yankee 'larm-clocks, an' that Red Dog hold-up don't seem none behind.

"About the fifth fire the Red Dog man sorter steps for'ard an' drops his gun; an' after standin' onsteady for a second, he starts to cripplin' down at his knees. At last he comes ahead on his face like a landslide. Thar's two bullets plum through his lungs, an' when we gets to him the red froth is comin' outen his mouth some plenteous.

"We packs him back into the Red Light an' lays him onto a monte-table. Bimeby he comes to a little an' Peets asks him whatever he thinks he wants.

"'I wants you-alls to take off my moccasins an' pack me into the street,' says the Red Dog man. 'I ain't allowin' for my old mother in Missoury to be told as how I dies in no gin-mill, which she shorely 'bominates of 'em. An' I don't die with no boots on, neither.'

"We-alls packs him back into the street ag'in, an' pulls away at his boots. About the time we gets 'em off he sags back convulsive, an' thar he is as dead as Santa Anna.

"'What sort of a game is this, anyhow?' says Dan Boggs, who, while we stands thar, has been pawin' over the Red Dog man's rifle. 'Looks like this vivacious party's plumb locoed. Yere's his hind-sights wedged up for a thousand yards, an' he's been a-shootin' of cartridges with a hundred an' twenty grains of powder into 'em. Between the

sights an' the jump of the powder, he's shootin' plumb over Cherokee an' aimin' straight at him.'

"'Nellie,' says Enright, lookin' remorseful at the girl, who colors up an' begins to cry ag'in, 'did you cold-deck this yere Red Dog sport this a-way?'

"'I'm 'fraid,' sobs Nell, 'he gets Cherokee; so I slides over when you-alls is waitin' an' fixes his gun some.'

"'Which I should shorely concede you did,' says Enright. 'The way that Red Dog gent manip'lates his weepon shows he knows his game; an' except for you a-settin' things up on him, I'm powerful afraid he'd spoiled Cherokee a whole lot.'

"'Well, gents,' goes on Enright, after thinkin' a while, 'I reckons we-alls might as well drink on it. Hist'ry never shows a game yet, an' a woman in it, which is on the squar', an' we meekly b'ars our burdens with the rest.'"

JEAN MICHAUD'S LITTLE SHIP

BY CHARLES G. D, ROBERTS

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PATIENTLY, doggedly, yet with the light in his eyes that belongs to the enthusiast and the dreamer, young Jean Michaud had worked at it. Throughout the winter he had hewed the seasoned timbers and the diminutive hackmatack "knees" from the swamp far back in the Equille Valley; and whenever the sledding was good with his yoke of black oxen he had hauled his materials to the secret place of his shipbuilding by the winding shore of a deep tidal tributary of the Port Royal. In the spring he had laid the keel and riveted securely to it the squared hackmatack knees. It was unusual to use such sturdy and unmanageable timbers as these hackmatack knees for a craft so small as this which the young Acadian was building; but Jean Michaud's thoughts were long thoughts and went far ahead. He was putting all his hopes as well as all his scant patrimony into this little ship; and he was resolved that it should be strong to carry his fortunes.

Through all the green and blue and golden Acadian summer he had toiled joyously at bending the thin planks and riveting them soundly to the ribs, the stem and the sternpost. It was hot work, but white and savory, the clean spruce planks that he wrought with breathing sweet scents to his lungs as adze and chisel and saw set free the tonic spirit of their fibres. His chips soon spread a yellow carpet over the mossy sward and the tree-roots. The yellow sides of his graceful craft presently arose high among the green kissing branches of the water-ash and Indian pear. The tawny golden shimmering current of the creek lipped up at high tide close under the stern of the little ship and set afloat the lowest layers of the chips; while at ebb a gleaming abyss of red mud with walls sloping sharply to a mere rivulet at their foot seemed to tempt the structure to a premature launching

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and a wild swooping rush to oozy doom. Very secluded, far apart from beaten highway or forest byway, and quite aside from all the river traffic, was the place of Jean Michaud's shipbuilding. And so it came about that the clear ringing blows of his adze, the sharp staccato of his diligent hammer and the strident crying of his saw brought no answer but the chatter of the striped chipmunks among the near tree-roots, or the scolding of the garrulous and inquisitive red squirrels from the branches overhead. At the quiet of the noon hour, while Jean lay in the shade contemplating his handiwork, and weaving his many-colored dreams, and munching his brown-bread cakes and pale cheese, the clucking partridge hen would lead her brood out to investigate the edges of the chip-strewn open, where insects gathered in the heat. And afterward, when once more Jean's hammering set up its brisk and cheerful echoes, the big golden-wing woodpeckers would promptly accept the sound as a challenge, and begin an emulous rat-tat-tat-tat-ting on the resonant sound-board of a dead beech not far off.

By the time the partridge brood had taken to whirring up into the maple branches when alarmed, instead of scurrying to cover in the underbrush, the hull was completed; and a smell of smoking pitch drowned the woodsy odors as Jean calked the seams. Then the pale yellow of the timbers no more shone through the reddening leafage, but a sombre black bulk loomed impressively above the chips, daunting the squirrels for a few days with its strange shadow. By the time of the moose-calling, when the rowan-berries hung in great scarlet bunches and half the red leafage was turning brown, and the pale gold birch leaves fell in fluttering showers at every gust, two slim masts had raised their tops above the trees, and a white bowsprit was thrusting its nose into the branches of the nearest red maple. Under the bowsprit glittered a carved and gilded Madonna, the most auspicious figurehead to which, in Jean's eyes, he could intrust the fortunes of his handiwork. A few days more and the ship was done—so nearly complete that three or four hours of work would make her ready for sea. Being so small, it was feasible to launch her in this advanced state of equipment; and the conditions under which she had been built made it neces-

sary that she should be prepared to hurry straight from the greased ways of the launching to the security of the open sea. The tidal creek in which she would first take water could give her no safe harborage; and once out of the creek she would have to make all speed, under cover of night, till Port Royal River and the sodded ramparts of Annapolis town should be left many miles astern.

Having made his preparations and gathered his materials far ahead, and devised his precautions with subtlety, and accustomed his neighbors to the idea that he was an erratic youth, given to long absences and futile schemes, not worth gossip, Jean had succeeded in keeping his enterprise a secret from all but two persons. These two, deep in his counsel's from the first, were Barbe Dieudonné, his sweetheart, and Mich' Masson, his friend and ally.

Mich' Masson—whose home, which served him best as a place to stay away from, was in the village of Grand Pré, far up on the Basin of Minas—had been Jean's close friend since early boyhood, in the days before Port Royal town had been captured by the English and found its name changed to Annapolis.

He was a daring adventurer, hunter, woods-ranger, an implacable partisan of the French cause, and just now deeply interested in the traffic between Acadie and the new French fortress city of Louisburg—a traffic which the English Governor was angrily determined to break up. Mich' Masson could sail a ship as well as set a dead-fall or lay an ambush. He had kept bright in Jean's heart the flame of hatred against the English conquerors of Acadie. It was he who had come to the aid of Jean's shipbuilding from time to time, when timbers had to be put in place which were too heavy for one pair of hands to work with. It was, indeed, at his suggestion that Jean had finally decided to sell his cottage on the outskirts of Annapolis town, his scrap of upland with its apple trees in full bearing—and to settle under the walls of Louisburg, where the flag he loved should always wave over his roof-tree.

It was Mich' Masson who had shown Jean how by this course he could quickly grow rich, and make a home for Barbe which that somewhat disconcerting and incomprehen-

sible maiden would not scorn to accept. Mich' Masson loved his own honor. He loved Jean. He hated the English. Jean's secret was safe with him.

Mademoiselle Barbe, under a disguise of indifference which sometimes reduced Jean to the not unprofitable condition wherein hard work is the sole refuge from despair, hid a passionate interest in her lover's undertaking. She, too, hated the new domination. She, too, chafed to escape from Annapolis and take up life anew under her old Flag of the Fleur-de-lis. Moreover, her restless and fiery spirit could accept no contented tiller of green Acadian acres for a mate; and she was resolved that Jean's courageous heart and stirring dreams should translate themselves into action. She would have him not only the daring dreamer but the daring doer—the successful smuggler, the shrewd foiler of the English watch-dogs, the admired and consulted partisan leader. That he had it in him to be all these things she felt utterly convinced; but she proposed that the debilitating effects of too much happiness should have no chance of postponing his success. Her keen watchfulness detected every weak spot in Jean's enterprise, every unguarded point in his secret; and her two-edged mockery which seemed as careless and inconsequent as the wind, at once accomplished the effects she had in view. Her fickleness of mood, her bewildering caprice, were the iridescent foam-bubbles veiling a deep and steady current. She knew that she loved Jean's love for her, of which she felt as certain as dawn does of the sunrise. She had a suspicion in the deep of her heart that she might be in love with Jean himself; but of this she was in no haste to be assured. She was loyal in every fibre. And Jean's secret was safe with her.

Thus the wonder came to pass that Jean's secret, though known to three people, yet remained so long a secret. Had the English Governor, behind his sodded ramparts overlooking the tide, got wind of it, never would Jean Michaud's little ship have sailed the open, save with an English captain and an English crew. It would have been confiscated, on the not unreasonable presumption that it was intended for the forbidden trade.

Early in the afternoon, on a day of mid-October, Jean

stepped down the ladder which leaned against the starboard bow of his ship, and contemplated with satisfaction the name, "Mon Rêve," which he had just painted in strong, gold lettering. The exultation in his eyes became a passion of love and worship, as he turned to the slim girl who lay curled up luxuriously on a sweet-smelling pile of dried ferns and marsh-grass, watching him.

"Since you won't let me name her directly after you, that is the nearest I can come to it, Barbe," he said. "You can't find fault with that. You are my dream—and all else besides."

For a moment she watched him in silence. Her figure was of a childish slenderness, and there was a childish abandon in her attitude. The small hands crossed idly in her lap were very dark and thin and long-fingered, with rosy nails. She was dressed in skirt and bodice of the creamy Acadian homespun linen, the skirt reaching not quite to her slim ankles. Her mouth was full and red, half sorrowful, half mocking. Her face, small and rather thin, was tanned to a clear, dark brown, and of a type that suggested a strain of the ancient blood of the Basques. The thick black masses of her hair, with a rebel wave in them, and here and there a glint of flame, half covered her little ears and were gathered into a knot at the back of her neck. The brim of her low-crowned hat of quilted linen was tilted far down to shade her face; and her eyes, very green and clear and large, made a bewildering brilliance in the shadow.

The light in her eyes softened presently, and she said in a low voice:

"Poor boy, a very sharp reality you find me most of the time, I'm afraid."

For this unexpected utterance Jean had no words of answer ready, but his look was a sufficiently eloquent refutation. He took a few eager steps toward her; then, reading inhibition in the sudden gravity of her mouth, he checked himself.

"Day after to-morrow, about sundown," said he, "our Lady and St. Joseph permitting, we will get her launched. The tide will be full then, and we will run down with it, and pass the fort before moonrise. If the wind's fair we

will get out of the Basin and off to sea that same night; but if it fails us there'll be tide enough to get us round the Island and into a hidden anchorage in Hibert River. Then —a cargo of Acadian beef and barley for Louisburg! And then—money! And then—and then—you!"

He looked at her with pleading and longing in his eyes, but with a doggedness about his mouth which told of much pain endured and a determination which might bide its time, indeed, but would not be balked. The look of the mouth she was conscious of, deep down in her heart, and she in reality rested upon it; but it was the look in his eyes which she answered. She answered it lightly. A mocking smile played about the corners of her lips and her eyes sparkled upon him whimsically. The look both repulsed and invited him; and he hung for some moments, as it were, trembling midway between the promise and the denial.

"Don't be too sure of—me!" she said at last. And his face fell—not so much at the words themselves as at their discouraging accent.

"But," he protested, "it is all planned, all done, just for you, Barbe. There is nothing in it at all, except you. It is all you. That is understood between us from the first, and all the time."

Still her mouth mocked him; and still her eyes gleamed upon him with their enigmatic light.

"You will have your beautiful little ship," she said slowly. "You will have wonderful adventures—and little time to think of me at all. You will make a wonderful deal of money. You will make your name famous and hated among these English. I am expecting you to do great things. But as for me—I am not won yet, Jean."

His eyes glowed upon her, and the lines of his face set themselves with a sudden masterfulness. He gave a little, soft laugh.

"You are mine! You will be my wife before I make my second voyage."

"If you believe that, you ought to be a very happy man," she retorted, and her smile softened almost imperceptibly as she said it. "You don't look quite as happy as you ought to, Jean!"

"*Don't* make me wait for my second voyage! Let me take you away from this unhappy country. Come with me—come with me now!"

He spoke swiftly, his voice thick with the sudden outburst of passion long held in check; and he strode forward to catch her in his arms.

Instantaneous as a darting bird, or a flash of light on a wave, she was up from her resting-place and away behind the pile of grass and ferns.

"Stay there!" she commanded, "or I'll go home at once!" And Jean stayed.

She laughed at him gayly, mercilessly.

"Would you have me take you on trust, Jean?" she questioned, with her head on one side. "How do I know that you are going to be brave enough to fight the English, or clever enough to outwit them? How do I know you will really do the great things I'm expecting of you? I know your dreams are fine, Boy; but you must show me deeds."

"I will," he answered quietly. "Come here, Sweet, just for one minute!"

"No," she said with a very positive shake of her small head. "You must go on with your work. You have more to do yet than you realize. And *I've* something to do, too. I must go home at once."

"That's not fair, Barbe!" he pleaded.

"I don't care! It is good for you. No, don't come one step with me. Not one step. Go on with your work. I'm going to fly."

She ran lightly across the chips, at a safe distance from Jean's outstretched arms, and turned into the trail among the maples. There she paused, gave her lover one melting, caressing, but still half-mocking glance, and cried to him:

"I am making a flag for 'Mon Rêve,' and it's not *nearly* done yet, Jean."

Then she disappeared among the bright branches.

With a tumult in his heart Jean turned back to his ladder and paint-pot. Little twinges of angry disappointment ran along his nerves, only to be smothered straightway in a flood of passionate tenderness.

"Next voyage, anyway!" he muttered to himself as he

worked feverishly. "I couldn't *live* longer than that without her!" And he went over and over in his imagination every detail of the girl's appearance, the changing moods of her radiant dark face, her hair, her hands, the tones of her voice.

Along the trail through the autumn maples, meanwhile Mademoiselle Barbe was speeding on light feet. The little smile was gone from the corners of her mouth, and into her eyes, now that Jean could no longer see them, was come a great gentleness. Her mockery, her impatience, her picturesque asperity were a kind of game which she played with herself, to disguise, sometimes even from herself, the greatness and the oversensitiveness of her heart. At this moment she was feeling sore at the nearness of Jean's departure, and was conscious of the pressure of his will urging her to go with him. This she was resolved she would not do; but she was equally resolved that her flag should be ready and go in her place. As for the next voyage—well, she thought to herself that Jean might persuade her by that time, if he tried hard. As to his success she had not really a grain of doubt. She knew well enough the quality of his fibre. Her light feet, as she hurried, made hardly a sound upon the soft mould of the trail, which was half-hidden by the bright autumn carpeting of the leaves. But presently she heard the noise of heavier footfalls approaching. Just ahead of her the trail turned sharply. Peering through the tangle of branches and thinned leafage, she caught glimpses of something that caused her face to grow pale, her heart to throb up into her throat; and she stepped behind the thick shelter of a fir bush to consider what was to be done.

The sight that so disturbed her was in itself no terrible one. A tall, ruddy-faced, keen-eyed man, carelessly dressed, but of erect, military bearing, came striding up the trail, a gun over his arm, a brown dog at his heels. Barbe recognized him at once—the English officer in command of the fort at Annapolis. She saw that he was out for partridges—but she saw, also, that he was walking at a pace that would speedily devour the scant two miles that divided him from the shipyard of "Mon Rêve." It was evident that he had forgotten his shooting in his interest in this unknown trail

upon which he had stumbled. If he went on the game was up for Jean's little ship!

She resolved that he should not go on. It took her just five seconds to decide the whole question. There was a large fallen tree close beside the trail, two or three paces from where she hid. Over this she threw herself discreetly, with a little choking scream, and lay moaning among the leaves beside it.

The Englishman darted forward and was at her side in a moment, bending over her with a mingling of alarm and admiration in his gray eyes.

"Mademoiselle," he cried, "what has happened? Are you much hurt?"

Receiving no answer, but more faint moans, he lifted her gently and stood her on her feet; but the instant he released her she collapsed upon the leaves, an appealing but intoxicating confusion of skirts, and slim brown hands, and crinkly dark hair, and the corner of a red mouth, and the glimpse of an ankle.

"Mademoiselle! Tell me what is the matter. Tell me what can I do. Let me do something, I beg of you!" Lifting her again, he seated her beside him on the fallen tree; and this time he did not at once release her. At first, her eyes closed and her face a little drawn as with pain, she clung instinctively to his arm, with hands that seemed to him the most maddening that he had ever seen. Then, after several minutes which were very agreeable to him in spite of his anxiety, she appeared to pull herself together with a mighty effort. She moved away from his clasp, sat up straight, and opened upon him great eyes of pain and gratitude.

"Oh, thank you, Monsieur!" she said simply. "I'm afraid I have been very troublesome. But, indeed, I thought I was going to die."

"But what is the matter, Mademoiselle? Tell me, and let me help you."

She sat cringing and setting her teeth hard. He noticed how white were the teeth, how scarlet the full lips.

"It is just my heart," she said. "I was looking through the bushes to see who was coming. Something startled me,

I think; and the pain clutched at my heart so I could not breathe, and I fell off."

She paused, to moan a little softly and catch her breath. Before he could say anything she went on:

"It's better now, but it hurts horribly."

"Let me support you, Mademoiselle," he urged with eager courtesy.

But she shrank away from the approaching ministration.

"No, Monsieur, I am better, really. But I must get home as quick as I can." She rose unsteadily.

The Englishman arose at the same time. The next moment Barbe sank back again, biting her lips to keep back a cry.

"Oh," she gasped, "I can't stand it! How can I get home?"

"You must let me see you home, Mademoiselle," said the officer, authority blending with palpable enthusiasm in his tones.

"You are so good, Monsieur," she murmured gratefully. "But I could not think of taking you away back so far, almost to the village. It will spoil your afternoon's sport."

The sympathy of the Englishman's face gave way to amusement, and he hastened to assure her of her mistake.

"Not at all, indeed, Mademoiselle. It will be quite as much my pleasure as my duty to see you safely home. Your misfortune—if not too serious—is my great good fortune!"

Thanking him with a look, Barbe arose weakly and took the proffered arm. At first the homeward journey was very slow; but as the afternoon deepened, and the miles gathered between the English commandant and Jean's little ship, the girl began to let herself recover. By this time she felt that there was no danger of her escort leaving her one minute before he was obliged to; and she knew that now, for this night, the ship was safe. At last, as they emerged from the woods into a high pasture-ground, behind the cottage where Barbe lived with her aunt and uncle, the Englishman threw off the gallant for a moment and became the wide-awake officer. He paused, took his bearings carefully, and scrutinized the trail behind him with searching eyes.

"I have not seen this road before, Mademoiselle," he re-

marked, "and it interests me. It is not down on our map of the Annapolis district. Whither does it lead, may I ask?"

Barbe's heart grew faint within her; but she answered lightly, with a look that somehow conveyed to him the impression that he should not be interested in roads when she was by.

"They haul wood over it, my uncle and his neighbors, in the winter," she answered, "and black mud in summer from the swamp back there."

The Englishman appeared satisfied; but she felt that his curiosity was aroused, and with all her arts she strove to divert his thoughts exclusively to herself. She succeeded in this to a degree that presently began to stir her apprehensiveness, and at her doorway she made her grateful farewells a trifle hurried. But the Englishman would listen to nothing more discouraging than au revoir. At last he said:

"I shall be shooting over these woods again to-morrow" —Barbe clutched hard upon the latch and held her breath— "and shall give myself the pleasure of calling to ask after —but no!" he corrected himself. "You are making me forget, Mademoiselle. I have a council-meeting to fill my day with drudgery to-morrow." (Barbe breathed again at this respite.) "I must deny myself till the day after. I may call then, may I not?"

There was a moment's pause, and in that moment the girl's swift brain made its decision.

"Certainly, Monsieur le Commandant," she said, sweeping his face with a brilliant glance that made his nerves tingle sweetly; "I shall be much honored. My aunt and I will be much honored!" And with a curtsy half mocking, half formal, and a disastrous curving of her scarlet lips, she slipped into the house.

"By—Jove!" muttered the Englishman, as he strode away in a daze.

From the window, behind the bean vines, Barbe watched him go. The instant he was out of sight she darted from the door, sped swiftly over the rough pasture-lot, and disappeared among the twilights of the trail, where the afternoon shadows were already darkening to purple. She ran with the endurance of health and practice and a clean-

breathing outdoor life; but presently her breath began to fail, her heart to thump madly against her slim sides. Then —around a bend of the trail came Jean, returning earlier than his wont. With an exclamation of glad surprise he sprang forward to meet her. Still more was his surprise when she caught him by the shoulders with both hands and leaned, gasping and sobbing, against his breast.

After one fierce clasp he held her lightly and tenderly like a child, and anxiously scanned her face.

"What is it, Barbe, beloved? What is the matter?" he questioned eagerly.

"The ship," she panted, "must go! You must go—*to-morrow* night!"

"Why? But it is impossible!" he protested, bewildered. "Mich' won't be here till the day after—and one man can't launch her, and can't sail her all by himself."

"I tell you it must be done," she cried imperiously. "You must, you must!" And then, in a few edged words, she explained the situation. "If you can't, all is lost," she concluded, "for they will discover you, and seize the ship, the day after to-morrow. Jean, I would never believe that you had any such word as 'can't.'"

By this time Jean's face was white and his jaw was set.

"Of course," he said quietly, "it will be done somehow. I'm not beaten till I'm dead. But the chances are, Sweet, that after I get the little ship launched I'll run her aground somewhere down the river, and be caught next day like a rat in a barrel. It's ticklish navigating at best, down the river, and one man can't rightly manage even the foresail alone, and steer, in those eddies and twists in the channel. But—"

"But, Jean—" she interrupted, and then paused, leaning close against him, and looking up at him with eyes that seemed to him to make a brightness in the dark.

"But what, beautiful one?" he questioned, leaning his face over her, and growing suddenly tremulous with a vague, wonderful expectancy.

"I can help! Take me!" And she hid her eyes against his rough shirt-sleeve.

For one moment Jean stood tense, moveless, unable to

apprehend this sudden realization of his dreams. Then he swung her light figure up into his arms, and covered her face and hair with kisses. With a little smile of content upon her lips she suffered his madness for a while. Then she made him put her down.

"There is no time now to make love to me," she said. "We've so much to do and plan. You've never run away with a ship and a girl before, Jean, and we must make sure you know just how to go about it."

That night Barbe snatched a few hours of sleep, being mindful of the witchery of her eyes. But Jean toiled all night long, driving his yoke of oxen to and fro between his cabin and his shipyard in the forest. And he was not weary. His heart was light as air and sang with every pulse. His strength and his star—he felt them equal to any crisis.

On the following afternoon, when it wanted yet an hour of high tide, and the shadows of the maples were beginning to creep over the yellow chips, all was ready. Full of a wild gayety, and untiring as a boy, Barbe had worked all day, getting the sails bent, the stores on board, the last of block and tackle into place. Suddenly, from a post of vantage in the high-pointing bowsprit, she looked down the trail and clapped her brown hands with a shout of delight.

"Mich' has come!" she cried. And Mich' Masson, striding into the open, threw down a big red bundle on the chips.

"Pretty nigh ready?" he inquired. "Why, what is the matter, *mon gar'?*"

Jean's face had fallen like his heart. There was no longer any necessity of Barbe's sharing his adventure. But he hurried forward and clasped his friend's hand.

"We've got to get away to-night," he stammered, struggling bravely to make his voice sound cheerful. "The English are coming over here to-morrow to find out what's going on—so it's time for us to be going off! Barbe was to help me through with it."

Mich' held to Jean's hand, and glanced questioningly from his troubled face to the girl's teasing one. But Barbe had burned her bridges and saw no reason to be unmerciful.

"I suppose I'll have to be just crew and cabin-boy now,

Mich'," she pouted. "Jean was going to let me be first mate, and there wasn't to be any crew."

A great joy broke over Jean's face, and Mich' removed his gray woolen cap with a sweeping bow. But before either could reply there came from a little way up the trail the excited yapping as of a dog that has treed a partridge. The three looked at each other, their eyes wide with apprehension. Then the report of a gun.

"The Englishman!" gasped Barbe. "He has not waited. Quick, hide, one each side of the trail, and take him prisoner. Don't shoot him. He was kind to me."

Jean snatched up his musket and the two men darted into the bush. By a rope from the bulwarks Barbe swung herself lightly to the ground. In haste she crossed the chip-strewn open, and then, carelessly swinging her hat in her hand, and singing a fitful snatch of song, she sauntered up the trail to meet the intruder.

The trail wound rapidly, so that before she had gone two-score paces the ship was hid from her view. A few steps more and the Englishman came in sight, swinging forward alertly, a fluff of brown feathers dangling from his right hand. He was face to face with Barbe; and the delighted astonishment that came into his eyes was dashed with a faint chill of suspicion.

"How fate favors me, Mademoiselle!" he exclaimed, doffing his cap. "Gad, you are a brave girl to wander so far into the woods alone!"

"No, Monsieur, fate does not favor you," retorted Barbe with a sort of intimate petulance, holding out her brown fingers. "You had no business coming to-day when you said you were not coming till to-morrow. Now, you are going to find out a secret of mine which I didn't want any one to find out."

"But you are not angry at seeing me," he protested.

"N-n-o-o!" she answered, her head upon one side in doubt, while she bewildered him with her eyes. "But I'm sorry in a way! Well, come and I'll show you. Forgive me for lying to you yesterday about this road!"

And she turned to accompany him, walking very close to his side, so that her slim shoulder touched his arm and

Slurred his sagacity. The next instant came the sharp order: "Halt! Don't stir, or you're dead!"

The Englishman found himself facing two leveled muskets. At the same moment his own weapon went flying into the underbrush, twitched from his hold by a dexterous catch of Barbe's fingers.

He stood still and very straight, his arms at his sides, eying his assailants steadily. His first impulse was to dart upon them with his naked hands; but he saw the well-knit form of Jean, almost his own height, the lean, set face, a certain exultation in the eyes which he read aright; and he saw the shrewd, dark, confident look of Mich', the experienced master of situations. The red mounted slowly to his face, and he turned upon Barbe a look wherein reproach at once gave way to scorn and a kind of shame.

Barbe herself flushed under that look.

"You wrong me, Monsieur!" she cried impetuously. "I did it to save you. You are a brave man, and would have tried to fight, and they would have killed you!"

He bowed stiffly and turned to the men.

"What do you want of me?"

"Your parole!" said Jean. "Give us your word that you will come with us quietly, making no resistance and no effort to escape." The Englishman shut his lips doggedly.

"Then you must be bound," said Mich' with curt decision. "We've no time to waste."

"Let *me* bind you, Monsieur," said Barbe, taking his wrists gently and putting them behind his back. "It is no dishonor to be captive to a woman."

With a silk scarf from her waist, and a feminine cunning in knots, she quickly tied his hands together so that he felt himself quite hopeless of escape. Then, in a cold wrath, he was led forward, with no constraint but Barbe's touch upon his arm. The ship, high on her stocks, came into view. And he understood.

Seating himself upon a log, with his back against a tree, Mich' passed a rope about his waist and made him fast to the trunk. There he sat and chewed his indignation, while his captors went in haste about their work. But presently he grew interested. He saw the blocks knocked out from

under the little ship's sides, so that she came down upon the greased ways and slid smoothly into the flood. He saw her checked gradually by a rope turned once around a tree trunk, so that she was kept from running aground on the opposite side of the Basin. He saw a small boat dragged down from the bushes to the edge of the tide, and oars put into it. By this time he had revolved many aspects of the case in his mind. Then came to him Barbe and Jean.

"Monsieur," said Jean, "I regret to have inconvenienced you in this way. But you would without mercy have wrecked all my hopes. I have put all my means into this little ship, built with my own hands. My heart is set on removing from the land of Acadie, to live once more under my own flag of France. But I do not wish to take you a prisoner to Louisburg, or to put you to any further annoyance. To Mademoiselle Dieudonné you showed yourself yesterday a most kind and courteous gentleman. All Acadie knows you are brave. Give me your word that you will in no way seek to stop or hinder our departure, and let me set you free!"

"Give your parole, Monsieur!" begged Barbe, "or you will have to devote yourself to entertaining me all the way to Louisburg."

The Englishman's face brightened.

"Almost you make me wish to go to Louisburg, Mademoiselle. With the duty you apportion me I should be much happier, I assure you, than here in Annapolis trying to govern your good fellow-countrymen. But I will give my parole. I promise you, sir," and he turned his face to Jean, "that I will not in any way interfere with the departure of you and your ship from Acadie."

"Thank you," said Jean, and he undid the rope and the scarf.

The Englishman arose, walked down to the waterside with Barbe, and with elaborate courtesy helped her into the boat. He bent his lips over her hand as he said good-by.

Turning upon him then a laughing face of farewell, Barbe cried: "Never, never will I pardon you, Monsieur, for consenting to give your parole!"

"Mademoiselle." he answered, "I am your prisoner still, and always."

THOSE OLD LUNES!

OR, WHICH IS THE MADMAN?

BY W. GILMORE SIMMS

THOSE OLD LUNES!

By W. GILMORE SIMMS

"I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw."—*Hamlet.*

I

WE HAD spent a merry night of it. Our stars had paled their not ineffectual fires, only in the daylight; and while Dan Phœbus was yet rising, "jocund on the misty mountain tops," I was busy in adjusting my foot in the stirrup and mounting my good steed Priam, to find my way by a close cut, and through narrow Indian trails, to my lodgings in the little town of C——, on the very borders of Mississippi. There were a dozen of us, all merry larks, half mad with wine and laughter, and the ride of seven miles proved a short one. In less than two hours, I was snugly snoozing in my own sheets, and dreaming of the twin daughters of old Hansford Owens.

Well might one dream of such precious damsels. Verily, they seemed, all of a sudden, to have become a part of my existence. They filled my thoughts, excited my imagination, and,—if it be not an impertinence to say any thing of the heart of a roving lad of eighteen,—then were they at the very bottom of mine.—Both of them, let me say,—for they were twins, and were endowed with equal rights by nature. I was not yet prepared to say what was the difference, if any, between their claims. One was fair, the other brown; one pensive, the other merry as the cricket of Venus. Susannah was meek as became an Elder's daughter; Emmeline so mischievous that she might well have worried the meekest of the saints in the calendar from his propriety and position. I confess, though I thought constantly of Susannah, I always looked after Emmeline the first. She was the brunette —one of your flashing, sparkling, effervescing beauties,—

perpetually running over with exultation—brimful of passionate fancies that tripped, on tiptoe, half winged, through her thoughts. She was a creature to make your blood bound in your bosom,—to take you entirely off your feet, and fancy, for the moment, that your heels are quite as much entitled to dominion as your head. Lovely too,—brilliant, if not absolutely perfect in features—she kept you always in a sort of sunlight. She sung well, talked well, danced well—was always in air—seemed never herself to lack repose, and, it must be confessed, seldom suffered it to any body else. Her dancing was the crowning grace and glory. She was no Taglioni—not an Ellsler—I do not pretend that. But she was a born artiste. Every motion was a study. Every look was life. Her form subsided into the sweetest luxuriance of attitude, and rose into motion with some such exquisite buoyancy, as would become Venus issuing from the foam. Her very affectations were so naturally worn, that you at length looked for them as essential to her charm. I confess —but no! Why should I do anything so foolish?

Susannah was a very different creature. She was a fair girl—rather pale, perhaps, when her features were in repose. She had rich soft flaxen hair, and dark blue eyes. She looked rather than spoke. Her words were few, her glances many. She was not necessarily silent in silence. On the contrary, her very silence had frequently a significance, taken with her looks, that needed no help from speech. She seemed to look through you at a glance, yet there was a liquid sweetness in her gaze, that disarmed it of all annoyance. If Emmeline was the glory of the sunlight—Susannah was the sovereign of the shade. If the song of the one filled you with exultation, that of the other awakened all your tenderness. If Emmeline was the creature for the dance,—Susannah was the wooing, beguiling Egeria who could snatch you from yourself in the moments of respite and repose. For my part I felt that I could spend all my mornings with the former, and all my evenings with the latter. Susannah with her large, blue, tearful eyes, and few, murmuring and always gentle accents, shone out upon me at nightfall as that last star that watches in the vault of night for the coming of the sapphire dawn.

So much for the damsels. And all these fancies, not to say feelings, were the fruit of but three short days' acquaintance with their objects. But these were days when thoughts travel merrily and fast—when all that concerns the fancies and the affections are caught up in a moment, as if the mind were nothing but a congeries of instincts, and the sensibilities, with a thousand delicate antennæ, were ever on the grasp for prey.

Squire Owens was a planter of tolerable condition. He was a widower, with these two lovely and lovable daughters —no more. But, bless you! Mine was no calculating heart. Very far from it. Neither the wealth of the father, nor the beauty of the girls, had yet prompted me to think of marriage. Life was pleasant enough as it was. Why burden it? Let well enough alone, say I. I had no wish to be happier. A wife never entered my thoughts. What might have come of being often with such damsels, there's no telling; but just then it was quite enough to dance with Emmeline, and muse with Susannah, and—*vive la bagatelle!*

I need say nothing more of my dreams, since the reader sufficiently knows the subject. I slept late that day, and only rose in time for dinner, which, in that almost primitive region, took place at 12 o'clock, M. I had no appetite. A herring and soda water might have sufficed, but these were matters foreign to the manor. I endured the day and headache together, as well as I could, slept soundly that night, with now the most ravishing fancies of Emmeline, and now the pleasant dreams of Susannah, one or other of whom still usurped the place of a bright particular star in my most capacious fancy. Truth is, in those heyday days, my innocent heart never saw any terrors in polygamy. I rose a new man, refreshed and very eager for a start. I barely swallowed breakfast when Priam was at the door. While I was about to mount, with thoughts filled with the meek beauties of Susannah,—I was arrested by the approach of no less a person than Ephraim Strong, the village blacksmith.

"You're guine to ride, I see."

"Yes."

"To Squire Owens, I reckon."

"Right."

"Well, keep a sharp look out on the road, for there's news come down that the famous Archy Dargan has broke Hamilton jail."

"And who's Archy Dargan?"

"What! don't know Archy? Why, he's the madman that's been shut up there, it's now guine on two years."

"A madman, eh?"

"Yes, and a mighty sevagerous one at that. He's the cunningest white man going. Talks like a book, and knows how to get out of a scrape,—is jest as sensible as any man for a time, but, sudden, he takes a start, like a shying horse, and before you knows where you are, his heels are in your jaw. Once he blazes out, it's knife or gun, hatchet or hickory—any thing he can lay hands on. He's kill'd two men already, and cut another's throat a'most to killing. He's an ugly chap to meet on the road, so look out right and left."

"What sort of man is he?"

"In looks?"

"Yes!"

"Well, I reckon, he's about your heft. He's young and tallish, with a fair skin, brown hair, and a mighty quick keen blue eye, that never looks steadily nowhere. Look sharp for him. The sheriff with his 's'pose-you-come-and-take-us'—is out after him, but he's mighty cute to dodge, and had the start some twelve hours afore they missed him."

II

The information thus received did not disquiet me. After the momentary reflection that it might be awkward to meet a madman, out of bounds, upon the highway, I quickly dismissed the matter from my mind. I had no room for any but pleasant meditations. The fair Susannah was now uppermost in my dreaming fancies, and, reversing the grasp upon my whip, the ivory handle of which, lined with an ounce or two of lead, seemed to me a sufficiently effective weapon for the worst of dangers, I bade my friendly blacksmith farewell, and dashed

forward upon the high road. A smart canter soon took me out of the settlement, and, once in the woods, I recommended myself with all the happy facility of youth, to its most pleasant and beguiling imaginings. I suppose I had ridden a mile or more—the story of the bedlamite was gone utterly from my thought—when a sudden turn in the road showed me a person, also mounted, and coming towards me at an easy trot, some twenty-five or thirty yards distant. There was nothing remarkable in his appearance. He was a plain farmer or woodman, clothed in simple homespun, and riding a short heavy chunk of an animal, that had just been taken from the plough. The rider was a spare, long-legged person, probably thirty years or thereabouts. He looked innocent enough, wearing that simple, open-mouthed sort of countenance, the owner of which, we assume, at a glance, will never set any neighbouring stream on fire. He belonged evidently to a class as humble as he was simple,—but I had been brought up in a school which taught me that the claims of poverty were quite as urgent upon courtesy as those of wealth. Accordingly, as we neared each other, I prepared to bestow upon him the usual civil recognition of the highway. What is it Scott says—I am not sure that I quote him rightly—

> "When men in distant forests meet,
> They pass not as in peaceful street."

And, with the best of good humour, I rounded my lips into a smile, and got ready my salutation. To account somewhat for its effect when uttered, I must premise that my own personal appearance, at this time, was rather wild and impressive. My face was full of laughter and my manners of buoyancy. My hair was very long, and fell in masses upon my shoulder, unrestrained by the cap which I habitually wore, and which, as I was riding under heavy shade trees, was grasped in my hand along with my riding whip. As the stranger drew nigh, the arm was extended, cap and whip lifted in air, and with free, generous lungs, I shouted—"good morning, my friend,—how wags the world with you to-day?"

The effect of this address was prodigious. The fellow

gave no answer,—not a word, not a syllable—not the slightest nod of the head,—*mais, tout au contraire*. But for the dilating of his amazed pupils, and the dropping of the lower jaw, his features might have been chiselled out of stone. They wore an expression amounting to consternation, and I could see that he caught up his bridle with increased alertness, bent himself to the saddle, half drew up his horse, and then, as if suddenly resolved, edged him off, as closely as the woods would allow, to the opposite side of the road. The undergrowth was too thick to allow of his going into the wood at the spot where we encountered, or he certainly would have done so. Somewhat surprised at this, I said something, I cannot now recollect what, the effect of which was even more impressive upon him than my former speech. The heads of our horses were now nearly parallel—the road was an ordinary wagon track, say twelve feet wide—I could have brushed him with my cap as we passed, and, waving it still aloft, he seemed to fancy that such was my intention, —for, inclining his whole body on the off side of his nag, as the Comanche does when his aim is to send an arrow at his enemy beneath his neck—his heels thrown back, though spurless, were made to belabour with the most surprising rapidity the flanks of his drowsy animal. And, not without some effect. The creature dashed first into a trot, then into a canter, and finally into a gallop, which, as I was bound one way and he the other, soon threw a considerable space between us.

"The fellow's mad!" was my reflection and speech, as, wheeling my horse half about, I could see him looking backward, and driving his heels still into the sides of his reluctant hack. The next moment gave me a solution of the matter. The simple countryman had heard of the bedlamite from Hamilton jail. My bare head, the long hair flying in the wind, my buoyancy of manner, and the hearty, and, perhaps, novel form of salutation with which I addressed him, had satisfied him that I was the person. As the thought struck me I resolved to play the game out, and, with a restless love of levity which has been too frequently my error, I put the whip over my horse's neck, and sent him forward in pursuit. My nag was a fine one, and very soon the space

was lessened between me and the chase. As he heard the footfalls behind, the frightened fugitive redoubled his exertions. He laid himself to it, his heels paddling in the sides of his donkey with redoubled industry. And thus I kept him for a good mile, until the first houses of the settlement grew visible in the distance. I then once more turned upon the path to the Owens', laughing merrily at the rare chase, and the undisguised consternation of the countryman. The story afforded ample merriment to my fair friends Emmeline and Susannah. "It was so ridiculous that one of my appearance should be taken for a madman. The silly fellow deserved the scare." On these points we were all perfectly agreed. That night we spent charmingly. The company did not separate till near one o'clock. We had fun and fiddles. I danced by turns with the twins, and more than once with a Miss Gridley, a very pretty girl, who was present. Squire Owens was in the best of humour, and, no ways loth, I was made to stay all night.

III

A new day of delight dawned upon us with the next. Our breakfast made a happy family picture, which I began to think it would be cruel to interrupt. So snugly did I sit beside Emmeline, and so sweetly did Susannah minister at the coffee urn, and so patriarchally did the old man look around upon the circle, that my meditations were all in favour of certain measures for perpetuating the scene. The chief difficulty seemed to be, in the way of a choice between the sisters.

> "How happy could I be with either,
> Were t'other dear charmer away."

I turned now from one to the other, only to become more bewildered. The lively glance and playful remark of Emmeline, her lovely, smiling visage, and buoyant, unpremeditative air, were triumphant always while I beheld them; but the pensive, earnest look of Susannah, the mellow cadences of her tones, seemed always to sink into my soul,

and were certainly remembered longest. Present, Emmeline was irresistible; absent, I thought chiefly of Susannah. Breakfast was fairly over before I came to a decision. We adjourned to the parlour,—and there, with Emmeline at the piano, and Susannah with her Coleridge in hand—her favourite poet—I was quite as much distracted as before. The bravura of the one swept me completely off my feet. And when I pleaded with the other to read me the touching poem of "Genevieve"—her low, subdued and exquisitely modulated utterance, so touching, so true to the plaintive and seductive sentiment, so harmonious even when broken, so thrilling even when most checked and hushed, was quite as little to be withstood. Like the ass betwixt two bundles of hay, my eyes wandered from one to the other uncertain where to fix. And thus passed the two first hours after breakfast.

The third brought an acquisition to our party. We heard the trampling of horses' feet in the court below, and all hurried to the windows, to see the new comer. We had but a glimpse of him—a tall, good-looking personage, about thirty years of age, with great whiskers, and a huge military cloak. Squire Owens met him in the reception room, and they remained some half hour or three quarters together. It was evidently a business visit. The girls were all agog to know what it was about, and I was mortified to think that Emmeline was now far less eager to interest me than before. She now turned listlessly over the pages of her music book, or strummed upon the keys of her piano, with the air of one whose thoughts were elsewhere. Susannah did not seem so much disturbed,—she still continued to draw my attention to the more pleasing passages of the poet; but I could see, or I fancied, that even she was somewhat curious as to the coming of the stranger. Her eyes turned occasionally to the parlour door at the slightest approaching sound, and she sometimes looked in my face with a vacant eye, when I was making some of my most favourable points of conversation.

At length there was a stir within, a buzz and the scraping of feet. The door was thrown open, and, ushered by the father, the stranger made his appearance. His air was

rather *distingué*. His person was well made, tall and symmetrical. His face was martial and expressive. His complexion was of a rich dark brown; his eye was grey, large, and restless—his hair thin, and dishevelled. His carriage was very erect; his coat, which was rather seedy, was close buttoned to his chin. His movements were quick and impetuous, and seemed to obey the slightest sound, whether of his own, or of the voices of others. He approached the company with the manner of an old acquaintance; certainly, with that of a man who had always been conversant with the best society. His ease was unobtrusive,—a polite deference invariably distinguishing his deportment whenever he had occasion to address the ladies. Still, he spoke as one having authority. There was a lordly something in his tones,—an emphatic assurance in his gesture,—that seemed to settle every question; and, after a little while, I found that, hereafter, if I played on any fiddle at all, in that presence, it was certainly not to be the first. Emmeline and Susannah had ears for me no longer. There was a something of impatience in the manner of the former whenever I spoke as if I had only interrupted much pleasanter sounds; and, even Susannah, the meek Susannah, put down her Coleridge upon a stool, and seemed all attention, only for the imposing stranger.

The effect upon the old man was scarcely less agreeable. Col. Nelson,—so was the stranger called—had come to see about the purchase of his upper mill-house tract—a body of land containing some four thousand acres, the sale of which was absolutely necessary to relieve him from certain incumbrances. From the conversation which he had already had with his visitor, it appeared that the preliminaries would be of easy adjustment, and Squire Owens was in the best of all possible humour. It was nothing but Col. Nelson,—Col. Nelson. The girls did not seem to need this influence, though they evidently perceived it; and, in the course of the first half hour after his introduction, I felt myself rapidly becoming *de trop*. The stranger spoke in passionate bursts,—at first in low tones,—with halting, hesitating manner, then, as if the idea were fairly grasped, he dilated into a torrent of utterance, his voice rising with his thought,

until he started from his chair and confronted the listener. I cannot deny that there was a richness in his language, a warmth and colour in his thought, which fascinated while it startled me. It was only when he had fairly ended that one began to ask what had been the provocation to so much warmth, and whether the thought to which we had listened was legitimately the growth of previous suggestions. But I was in no mood to listen to the stranger, or to analyze what he said. I found my situation quite too mortifying—a mortification which was not lessened, when I perceived that neither of the two damsels said a word against my proposed departure. Had they shown but the slightest solicitude, I might have been reconciled to my temporary obscuration. But no! they suffered me to rise and declare my purpose, and made no sign. A cold courtesy from them, and a stately and polite bow from Col. Nelson, acknowledged my parting salutation, and Squire Owens attended me to the threshold, and lingered with me till my horse was got in readiness. As I dashed through the gateway, I could hear the rich voice of Emmeline swelling exultingly with the tones of her piano, and my fancy presented me with the images of Col. Nelson, hanging over her on one hand, while the meek Susannah on the other, was casting those oblique glances upon him which had so frequently been addressed to me. "Ah! pestilent jades," I exclaimed in the bitterness of a boyish heart; "this then is the love of woman."

IV

Chewing such bitter cud as this, I had probably ridden a good mile, when suddenly I heard the sound of human voices, and looking up, discovered three men, mounted, and just in front of me. They had hauled up, and were seemingly awaiting my approach. A buzzing conversation was going on among them. "That's he!" said one. "Sure?" was the question of another. A whistle at my very side caused me to turn my head, and as I did so, my horse was caught by the bridle, and I received a severe blow from a club above my ears, which brought me down, almost unconscious, upon the

ground. In an instant, two stout fellows were upon me, and busy in the praiseworthy toil of roping me, hands and feet, where I lay. Hurt, stung, and utterly confounded by the surprise, I was not prepared to suffer this indignity with patience. I made manful struggle, and for a moment succeeded in shaking off both assailants. But another blow, taking effect upon my temples, and dealt with no moderate appliance of hickory, left me insensible. When I recovered consciousness, I found myself in a cart, my hands tied behind me, my head bandaged with a red cotton handkerchief, and my breast and arms covered with blood. A stout fellow rode beside me in the cart, while another drove, and on each side of the vehicle trotted a man, well armed with a double-barrelled gun.

"What does all this mean?" I demanded. "Why am I here? Why this assault? What do you mean to do with me?"

"Don't be obstropolous," said one of the men. "We don't mean to hurt you; only put you safe. We had to tap you on the head a little, for your own good."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed, the feeling of that unhappy tapping upon the head, making me only the sorer at every moment—"but will you tell me what this is for, and in what respect did my good require that my head should be broken?"

"It might have been worse for you, where you was onbeknown," replied the spokesman,—"but we knowd your situation, and sarved you off easily. Be quiet now, and——"

"What do you mean—what is my situation?"

"Well, I reckon we know. Only you be quiet, or we'll have to give you the skin."

And he held aloft a huge wagon whip as he spoke. I had sufficient proof already of the unscrupulousness with which my companions acted, not to be very chary of giving them farther provocation, and, in silent misgiving, I turned my head to the opposite side of the vehicle. The first glance in this quarter revealed to me the true history of my disaster, and furnished an ample solution of the whole mystery. Whom should I behold but the very fellow whom I had chased into town the day before. The truth was now apparent. I had

been captured as the stray bedlamite from Hamilton jail. It was because of this that I had been "tapped on the head—only for my own good." As the conjecture flashed upon me, I could not avoid laughter, particularly as I beheld the still doubtful and apprehensive visage of the man beside me. My laughter had a very annoying effect upon all parties. It was a more fearful sign than my anger might have been. The fellow whom I had scared, edged a little farther from the cart, and the man who had played spokesman, and upon whom the whole business seemed to have devolved, now shook his whip again—"None of that, my lad," said he, "or I'll have to bruise you again. Don't be obstropolous."

"You've taken me up for a madman, have you?" said I.

"Well, I reckon you ought to know what you are. There's no disputing it."

"And this silly fellow has made you believe it?"

"Reckon!"

"You've made a great mistake."

"Don't think it."

"But you have: Only take me to C——, and I'll prove it by General Cocke, himself, or Squire Humphries, or any body in the town."

"No! no! my friend,—that cock won't fight. We aint misdoubting at all, but you're the right man. You answer all the descriptions, and Jake Sturgis here, has made his affidavy that you chased him, neck and neck, as mad as any blind puppy in a dry September, for an hour by sun yesterday. We don't want no more proof."

"And where do you mean to carry me?" I enquired, with all the coolness I was master of.

"Well, we'll put you up in a pen we've got a small piece from here; and when the sheriff comes, he'll take you back to your old quarters at Hamilton jail, where I reckon they'll fix you a little tighter than they had you before. We've sent after the sheriff, and his 's'pose-you-come-and-take-us,' and I reckon they'll be here about sun-down."

V

Here was a "situation" indeed. Burning with indignation, I was yet sufficiently master of myself to see that any ebullition of rage on my part, would only confirm the impression which they had received of my insanity. I said little, therefore, and that little was confined to an attempt to explain the chase of yesterday, which Jake Sturgis had made the subject of such a mischievous "affidavy." But as I could not do this without laughter, I incurred the danger of the whip. My laugh was ominous,—Jake edged off once more to the roadside; the man beside me, got his bludgeon in readiness, and the potent wagon whip of the leader of the party was uplifted in threatening significance. Laughter was clearly out of the question, and it naturally ceased on my part, as I got in sight of the "pen" in which I was to be kept secure. This structure is one well known to the less civilized regions of the country. It is a common place of safe-keeping in the absence of jail and proper officers. It is called technically a "bull pen," and consists of huge logs, roughly put together, crossing at right angles, forming a hollow square,—the logs too massy to be removed, and the structure too high to be climbed, particularly if the prisoner should happen to be, like myself, fairly tied up hand and foot together. I reluctd terribly at being put into this place. I pleaded urgently, struggled fiercely, and was thrust in neck and heels without remorse; and, in sheer hopelessness and vexation, I lay with my face prone to the earth, and half buried among the leaves, weeping, I shame to confess it, the bitter tears of impotence and mortification.

Meantime, the news of my capture went through the country;—not *my* capture, mark me, but that of the famous madman, Archy Dargan, who had broke Hamilton jail. This was an event, and visitors began to collect. My captors, who kept watch on the outside of my den, had their hands full in answering questions. Man, woman and child, Squire and ploughboy, and, finally, dames and damsels, accumulated around me, and such a throng of eyes as pierced the crevices of my log dungeon, to see the strange monster by whom they

were threatened, now disarmed of his terrors, were,—to use the language of one of my keepers—"a power to calkilate." This was not the smallest part of my annoyance. The logs were sufficiently far apart to suffer me to see and to be seen, and I crouched closer to my rushes, and buried my face more thoroughly than ever, if possible, to screen my dishonoured visage from their curious scrutiny. This conduct mightily offended some of the visitors.

"I can't see his face," said one.

"Stir him with a long pole!"—and I was greatly in danger of being treated as a surly bear, refusing to dance for his keeper; since one of mine seemed very much disposed to gratify the spectator, and had actually begun sharpening the end of a ten foot hickory, for the purpose of pricking me into more sociableness. He was prevented from carrying his generous design into effect by the suggestion of one of his companions. "Better don't, Bosh; if ever he should git out agen, he'd put his ear mark upon you." "Reckon you're right," was the reply of the other, as he laid his rod out of sight.

Meanwhile, the people came and went, each departing visitor sending others. A couple of hours might have elapsed leaving me in this humiliating situation, chained to the stake, the beast of a bear garden, with fifty greedy and still dissatisfied eyes upon me. Of these, fully one fourth were of the tender gender; some pitied me, some laughed, and all congratulated themselves that I was safely laid by the heels, incapable of further mischief. It was not the most agreeable part of their remarks, to find that they all universally agreed that I was a most frightful looking object. Whether they saw my face or not, they all discovered that I glared frightfully upon them, and I heard one or two of them ask in under tones, "did you see his teeth—how sharp!" I gnashed them with a vengeance all the while, you may be sure.

VI

The last and worst humiliation was yet to come—that which put me for a long season out of humour with all

human and woman nature. Conscious of an unusual degree of bustle without, I was suddenly startled by sounds of a voice that had been once pleasingly familiar. It was that of a female, a clear, soft, transparent sound, which, till this moment, had never been associated in my thoughts with any thing but the most perfect of all mortal melodies. It was now jangled harsh, like "sweet bells out of tune." The voice was that of Emmeline. "Good heavens!" I exclaimed to myself—"can she be here?" In another instant, I heard that of Susannah—the meek Susannah,—she too was among the curious to examine the features of the bedlamite, Archy Dargan." "Dear me," said Emmeline, "is he in that place?"

"What a horrid place!" said Susannah.

"It's the very place for such a horrid creature," responded Emmeline.

"Can't he get out, papa?" said Susannah. "Isn't a mad person very strong?"

"Oh! don't frighten a body, Susannah, before we have had a peep," cried Emmeline; "I declare I'm afraid to look—do, Col. Nelson, peep first and see if there's no danger." And there was the confounded Col. Nelson addressing his eyes to my person, and assuring his fair companions, my Emmeline, my Susannah, that there was no sort of danger,—that I was evidently in one of my fits of apathy.

"The paroxysm is off for the moment, ladies,—and even if he were violent, it is impossible that he should break through the pen. He seems quite harmless—you may look with safety."

"Yes, he's mighty quiet now, Miss,"—said one of my keepers encouragingly, "but it's all owing to a close sight of my whip. He was a-guine to be obstropolous more than once, when I shook it over him—he's usen to it, I reckon. You can always tell when the roaring fit is coming on—for he breaks out in such a dreadful sort of laughing."

"Ha! Ha!—he laughs does he—Ha! Ha!" such was the somewhat wild interruption offered by Col. Nelson himself. If my laugh produced such an effect upon my keeper, his had a very disquieting effect upon me. But, the instinctive conviction that Emmeline and Susannah were now gazing upon me, prompted me with a sort of fascination, to

lift my head and look for them. I saw their eyes quite distinctly. Bright treacheries! I could distinguish between them—and there were those of Col. Nelson beside them—the three persons evidently in close propinquity.

"What a dreadful looking creature!" said Susannah.

"Dreadful!" said Emmeline, "I see nothing so dreadful in him. He seems tame enough. I'm sure, if that's a madman, I don't see why people should be afraid of them."

"Poor man, how bloody he is!" said Susannah.

"We had to tap him, Miss, a leetle upon the head, to bring him quiet. He's tame and innocent now, but you should see him when he's going to break out. Only just hear him when he laughs."

I could not resist the temptation. The last remark of my keeper fell on my ears like a suggestion, and suddenly shooting up my head, and glaring fiercely at the spectators, I gave them a yell of laughter as terrible as I could possibly make it.

"Ah!" was the shriek of Susannah, as she dashed back from the logs. Before the sounds had well ceased, they were echoed from without, and in more fearful and natural style from the practised lungs of Col. Nelson. His yells following mine, were enough to startle even me.

"What!" he cried, thrusting his fingers through the crevice, "you would come out, would you,—you would try your strength with mine. Let him out,—let him out! I am ready for him, breast to breast, man against man, tooth and nail, forever and forever. You can laugh too, but—Ha! Ha! Ha!—what do you say to that? Shut up, shut up, and be ashamed of yourself. Ha! Ha! Ha!"

There was a sensation without. I could see that Emmeline recoiled from the side of her companion. He had thrown himself into an attitude, had grappled the logs of my dungeon, and exhibited a degree of strange emotion, which, to say the least, took everybody by surprise. My chief custodian was the first to speak.

"Don't be scared, Mr.—there's no danger—he can't get out."

"But I say let him out—let him out. Look at him, ladies—look at him. You shall see what a madman is—

you shall see how I can manage him. Hark ye, fellow,—out with him at once. Give me your whip—I know all about his treatment. You shall see me work him. I'll manage him,—I'll fight with him, and laugh with him too—how we shall laugh—Ha! Ha! Ha!"

His horrible laughter—for it was horrible—was cut short by an unexpected incident. He was knocked down as suddenly as I had been, with a blow from behind, to the astonishment of all around. The assailant was the sheriff of Hamilton jail, who had just arrived and detected the fugitive, Archy Dargan—the most cunning of all bedlamites, as he afterwards assured me—in the person of the handsome Col. Nelson.

"I knew the scamp by his laugh—I heard it half a mile," said the sheriff, as he planted himself upon the bosom of the prostrate man, and proceeded to leash him in proper order. Here was a concatenation accordingly.

"Who hev' I got in the pen?" was the sapient inquiry of my captor—the fellow whose whip had been so potent over my imagination.

"Who? Have you any body there?" demanded the sheriff.

"I reckon!—We cocht a chap that Jake made affidavy was the madman."

"Let him out then, and beg the man's pardon. I'll answer for Archy Dargan."

My appearance before the astonished damsels was gratifying to neither of us. I was covered with mud and blood,—and they with confusion.

"Oh! Mr. ——, how could we think it was you, such a fright as they've made you."

Such was Miss Emmeline's speech after her recovery. Susannah's was quite as characteristic.

"I am so very sorry, Mr. ——."

"Spare your regrets, ladies," I muttered ungraciously, as I leapt on my horse. "I wish you a very pleasant morning."

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" yelled the bedlamite, writhing and bounding in his leash—"a very pleasant morning."

The damsels took to their heels, and went off in one direc-

tion quite as fast as I did in the other. Since that day, dear reader, I have never suffered myself to scare a fool, or to fall in love with a pair of twins; and if ever I marry, take my word for it, the happy woman shall neither be a Susannah, nor an Emmeline.

THE CHIROPODIST

BY BAYARD TAYLOR

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MR. HENRY BARTLETT was one of three gentlemen who rode from the railroad station to Moore's Hotel, at Trenton Falls, on the top of an omnibus; and who, having clambered down from that lofty perch, under the inspection of forty pairs of eyes leveled at them from the balcony, hastened to inscribe their names in the book, and secure the keys of their several chambers. To no one of the three, however, was this privacy so welcome as to Mr. Bartlett, who, entering his room with flushed face, nervously dismissed the servant, locked the door, and dropped into a chair with a pant of relief. Our business being entirely with him we shall at once dismiss his two companions—whom, indeed, we have only introduced as accessories to the principal figure—and, taking our invisible seats in the opposite chair, proceed to a contemplation of his person.

Age—four, perhaps five, and twenty—certainly not more; height, five feet nine inches, with well-developed breast and shoulders; limbs, whose firm, ample muscle betrays itself through the straight lines of his light summer costume, and hands and feet of agreeable shape; complexion fair, with a skin of feminine fineness and transparency, whereon the uncontrollable blood writes his emotions so palpably that he who runs may read; eyes of a clear, honest blue, but so shy of meeting a steady gaze that few know how beautiful they really are; mouth full and sensitive, and of so rich and dewy a red that we can not help wishing he were a woman that we might be pardoned for kissing it; forehead broad, and rather low; hair—but here we hesitate, for his enemies would certainly call it red. Indeed, in some lights it *is* red, but its prevailing tint is brown, with a bronze lustre on the curls. As he sits thus, unconscious of our observation, he is certainly handsome, in spite of a haunting air of timidity

which weakens the expression of features not weak in themselves. On further observation, we are inclined to believe that he has not achieved that easy poise of self-possession which, in men of becoming modesty, is the result of more or less social experience. He belongs, evidently, to that class of awkward, honest, warm-hearted, and sensitive natures whom all men like, and some women.

Mr. Bartlett's reflections, after his arrival, were—we have good reason to know—after this fashion: "When will I cease to be a fool? Why couldn't I stare back at all those people on the balcony as coolly as the two fellows who sat beside me? Why couldn't I get down without missing the step and grazing my shin on the wheel? Why should I walk into the house with my head down, and a million of cold little needles pricking my back, because men and women, and not sheep, were looking at me? I have at least an average body, as men go—an average intellect, too, I think; yet every day I see spindly, brainless squirts [Mr. Bartlett would not have used this epithet in conversation, but it certainly passed through his mind] put me to shame by their self-possession. The women think me a fool because I have not the courage to be natural and unembarrassed, and I carry the consciousness of the fact about me whenever I meet them. Come, come; this will never do. I am a man, and I ought to possess the ordinary resolution of a man. Now, here's a chance to turn over a new leaf. Nobody knows me; no one will notice me particularly; and whether I fail or succeed, the experiment will never be brought forward to my confusion hereafter."

Full of a sudden courage he sprang to his feet, and carefully adjusted his toilet for the tea-table, whistling cheerfully all the while. At the sound of the gong he descended the staircase, and approached the dining-room with head erect, meeting the gaze of the other guests with a steadiness which resembled defiance. He was surprised to find how mechanical and transitory were the glances he encountered. As Mr. Bartlett's friend, I should not like to assert that in his efforts to appear self-possessed he approached the bounds of effrontery; but I have my own private suspicions about the matter. At the table a lively conversation was carried

on, and he was able to take many stealthy observations of the ladies without being noticed. To his shame I must confess that he had never been seriously in love, though it was a condition he most earnestly desired. Attracted toward women by the instinct of his nature, and repelled by his awkward embarrassment, there seemed little chance that he would ever attain it. On this particular occasion, however, he cast his eyes around with the air of a sultan scanning his slaves before throwing the handkerchief to the chosen one. The female guests—old, young, married, single, ill-favored or beautiful—were subjected to the review. It is impossible to describe Mr. Bartlett's satisfaction with himself.

He had passed over twenty-nine of the thirty-five ladies present without experiencing any special emotion; but at the thirtieth he was suddenly attacked by a recurrence of his habitual timidity. He fixed his eyes upon his toast, painfully conscious by the warmth of his ears that he was blushing violently, and actually drank a third cup of tea (one more than his usual allowance) before he became sufficiently composed to look up again. Really there was no cause for confusion. Her face was turned away so that even the profile was not wholly visible; but the exquisite line of the forehead and cheek, bent inward at the angle of the unseen eye, and melting into the sweep of the neck and shoulder, were the surest possible prophecies of beauty. Her chestnut hair, rippled at the temples, was gathered into a heavy, shining knot at the back of her head, and inwoven with the varnished, heart-shaped leaves of the smilax. More than this Mr. Bartlett did not dare to notice.

During the evening he flitted restlessly about the rooms, intent on an object which he thus explained to himself: "I should like to see whether her front face corresponds to the outline of her cheek. I am alone; it is too late to visit the Falls, and a whim of this sort will help me to pass the time." But the lady belonged, apparently, to a numerous party, who took possession of one end of the balcony and sat in the moonlight, in such a position that he could not see her features with distinctness. The face was a pure oval, in a frame-work of superb hair, and the glossy leaves of smilax glittered like silver in the moonlight whenever she chanced

to turn her head. There were songs, and she sang—"Scenes that are brightest," or something of the kind, suggested by the influences of the night. Her voice was clear and sweet, without much strength—one of those voices which seem to be made for singing to one ear alone. "Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me," thought Mr. Bartlett. [He had just been reading the "Idyls of the King."] He slipped off to bed, saying to himself: "A little more courage, and I may be able to make her acquaintance."

In the morning he set out to make the tour of the Falls. Entering the glen from below, he slowly crept up the black shelves of rock, under and around the rush of the amber waters. The naiads of Trenton, waving their scarfs of rainbow brede, tossed their foam fringes in his face: above, the dryads of the pine and beech looked down from their seats on the brink of the overhanging walls. Mr. Bartlett was neither a poet nor a painter, nor was it necessary; but his temperament (as you may know from his skin and the color of his hair) was joyous and excitable, and he felt a degree of delight that made him forget his own self. I fancy there are no embarrassing conventionalisms at the bottom of the earth—wherever that may be—and the glen at Trenton is two hundred feet on the way thither. Our friend enjoyed to the full this partial release, and was surprised to find that he could assist several married ladies to climb the slippery steps at the High Fall without consciously blushing.

How it came to pass he never could rightly tell, but certain it is that, on lifting his eyes after a long contemplation of the shifting slides of fretted amber, he found himself alone in the glen—with the exception of a young lady who sat on the rocks a few paces distant. At the first glance he thought it was a child, for the slight form was habited in a Bloomer dress, and a broad hat shaded the graceful head. The wide trowsers were gathered around her ankles, and a pair of the prettiest feet he had ever seen dangled in the edge of the swift stream. She was idly plucking up tufts of grass from the crevices of the rock, and tossing them in the mouth of the cataract, and her face was partly turned toward him. It was the fair unknown of the evening before! There was no mistaking the lovely cheek and the rippled chestnut hair.

Mr. Bartlett felt—as he afterward expressed himself—a warm, sweet shudder run through all his veins. Alone with that lovely creature, below the outside surface of the earth! "Oh, if I could but speak to her! Her dress shows that she can lay aside the soulless forms of society in such a place as this: why not I? There's Larkin, and Kirkland, and lots of fellows I know, wouldn't hesitate a moment. But what shall I say? 'The scenery's very fine?' Pshaw! But the first sentence is the only difficulty—the rest will come of itself. What if I address her boldly as an old acquaintance, and then apologize for my mistake? Upon my word, a good idea! So natural and possible!"

Having determined upon this plan, he immediately put it into action before the resolve had time to cool. His step was firm and his bearing was sufficiently confident as he approached her; but when she lifted her long lashes, disclosing a pair of large, limpid, hazel eyes, which regarded him, unabashed, with the transient curiosity one bestows upon a stranger, his face betrayed the humbug of the thing.

Raising his hat as he reached the corner of the rock upon which she sat, he said, in a voice so curiously balanced between his enforced boldness and his reflected surprise thereat, that he hardly recognized it as his own:

"How do you do, Miss Lawrence?"

The lady looked at him wonderingly—steady, childlike eyes, that frankly and innocently perused his face, as if seeking for some trace of a forgotten acquaintance. Mr. Bartlett could not withdraw his, although he knew that his face was getting redder and his respiration more unsteady every moment. He stammered forth:

"Miss Lawrence, of South Carolina, I believe."

"You are mistaken, Sir," said the lady, with the least shade of coldness in her voice, but it fell upon Mr. Bartlett like the wind from an iceberg—"I am not Miss Lawrence."

"I—I beg your pardon," he answered, somewhat confusedly. "You resemble her; I expected to meet her here. Will you please tell her I enquired for her? Here's my card!" Therewith he thrust both hands into his vest pockets, extracted a card from one of them, and laid it hastily upon the rock beside her.

"Bertha! Bertha!" rang through the glen, above the roar of the waterfall. The remainder of the party which the young lady had preceded now came into view descending toward her.

"Good-day, Miss Lawrence!" said Mr. Bartlett, again lifting his hat, and retracing his steps. For his life he could not have passed her and run the gauntlet of the faces of her friends upon the narrow path. Every soul of them would have instantly seen what a fool he was. Moreover, he had achieved enough for one day. The soldier who storms a perilous breach and finds himself alive on the inside of it could not be more astonished than he. "I blundered awfully," he thought; "but, after all, it's the one way to learn."—"Who's your friend, Bertha?" asked her brother, Dick Morris, the avant-guard of the party. "I never saw the fellow before."

"If you had not frightened him by your sudden appearance," said she, "you might have discovered. A Southerner, I suppose, though he don't look like one. He addressed me as Miss Lawrence, of South Carolina, and afterwards left me his card, to be given to her. What shall I do with it?"

"Ha! the card will tell us who he is," said Dick, picking it up. He instantly burst into a roar of laughter. "Ha! ha! This comes of wearing a Bloomer, Bertha! Though I must say it's by no means complimentary to your little feet. Who'd suspect *you* of having corns?"

"Dick, what *do* you mean?"

"Ha! ha! no doubt I came at the nick of time to prevent him from pulling off your shoes."

"DICK!"

Therewith she impatiently jerked the card from her brother's hand. It was large, thick, handsomely glazed, and contained the following inscription:

PROFESSOR HURLBUT,

CHIROPODIST

To her Majesty Queen Victoria, and the Nobility of Great Britain.

"Incredible!" she exclaimed. "So young, and embarrassed in his manners; how could he ever have taken hold of the Queen's foot?"

"Embarrassed indeed!" said Dick. "I think he has a very cool way of procuring patients. But, faith, he's chosen a romantic operating-room. After climbing down these rocks the corns naturally begin to twinge, and here's the Professor on hand. Behold the march of civilization!"

Bertha did not fall into her brother's vein of badinage, as usual. She was vexed that the fresh, manly face and blue eyes into which she had looked belonged to a charlatan, and vexed at herself for being vexed thereat. It was not so easy, however, to dismiss Professor Hurlbut from her mind, for Dick had related the incident to the others of the party, with his own embellishments, and numberless were the jokes to which it gave rise throughout the day.

Meantime Mr. Bartlett, in happy ignorance of the worst blunder he had ever made, returned to the hotel. The day previous, at Utica, he had been annoyed by an itinerant extractor of corns, suppressor of bunions, and regulator of irregular nails, whose proffered card he had put into his pocket in order to get rid of the man. It was *this* card which he had presented to Miss Morris as his own. On reaching the hotel he easily ascertained her real name and place of residence, with the additional fact that the party were to leave for Saratoga on the morrow. It occurred to him also that Saratoga, in the height of the season, would be well worth a visit.

In the evening he again happened to meet the lady on the stairs. He retreated into a corner of the landing, to make room for her ample skirts, and, catching a glance of curious interest in her hazel eyes, ventured to say: "Good-evening, Miss Law-ris!" suddenly correcting her name in the middle. Bertha, in spite of the womanly dignity which she could very well summon to her aid, could not suppress a fragment of gay laughter, in which the supposed Professor joined. A slight inclination of the lovely head acknowledged his salutation.

The next morning Miss Bertha Morris left, with her party, for Saratoga; and after allowing a day to intervene,

in order to avoid the appearance of design, Mr. Henry Bartlett followed. He did not admit to himself in the least that this movement was prompted by love; but he was aware of an intense desire to make her acquaintance. The earnestness which this desire infused into his nature gave him courage; the man within him was beginning to wake and stir; and a boyhood of character, prolonged beyond the usual date, was dropping rapidly into the irrecoverable conditions of the past.

It chanced that they both took quarters in the same hotel; and great was Bertha's astonishment, on her first morning visit to the Congress Spring, to find Professor Hurlbut quietly quaffing his third glass. He looked so much like a gentleman; he was really so fresh and rosy, so genuinely masculine in comparison with the blasé youths she was accustomed to see, that, forgetting his occupation, she acknowledged his bow with a cordiality which provoked herself the moment afterward. Mr. Bartlett was so much encouraged by this recognition that he ventured to walk beside her on their return to the hotel. She, having in the impulsive frankness and forgetfulness of her nature returned his greeting, felt bound to suffer the temporary companionship, embarrassing though it was. Fortunately none of her friends were in sight, nor was it probable that they knew the chiropodist in any case. She would be rid of him at the hotel door, and would take good care to avoid him in the future.

"How delightful it is here!" said Mr. Bartlett, thinking more of his present position than of Saratoga in general.

An inclination of the head was her only reply.

"This is my first visit," he added; "and I can not conceive of a summer society gayer or more inspiring."

"I have no doubt you will find it a very favorable place for your business," said Bertha, maliciously recalling him to his occupation, as she thought.

"Oh, I hope so!" exclaimed the innocent Bartlett. For was not his only business in Saratoga the endeavour to make her acquaintance? And was he not already in a fair way to be successful?

"Disgusting!" thought Bertha, as she suddenly turned

and sprang up the steps in front of the ladies' drawing-room. "He thinks of nothing but his horrid corn-plaster, or whatever it is! I really believe he suspects that I need his services. That such a man should be so brazen a charlatan—it is monstrous!"

Such thoughts were not an auspicious commencement for the day, and Bertha's friends remarked that she was not in her sunniest mood. She was very careful, however, not to speak of her meeting with the chiropodist; there would have been no end to her brother's banter. She was also vexed that she could not forget his honest blue eyes, and the full, splendid curves of his mouth. Indignation, she supposed, was her predominant emotion; but, in reality, there was a strong under-feeling of admiration, had she been aware of it.

After dinner Mr. Bartlett, occupying the post of observation at his window (room No. 1346, seventh story), saw the Morris party—Bertha among them—enter a carriage and drive away in the direction of the Lake. Half an hour later, properly attired, he mounted a handsome roan at the door of a livery-stable, and set off in the same direction. He was an accomplished rider, his legs being somewhat shorter than was required by due proportion, owing to which circumstance he appeared taller on horseback than afoot. Like all horsemen, he was thoroughly self-possessed when in the saddle; and could he but have ridden into drawing-rooms and dining-rooms, would have felt no trace of his customary timidity.

Bertha noticed his figure afar off, approaching the carriage on a rapid trot, but made no remark. Dick, who had a quick eye for good points both in man and beast, exclaimed, "By Jove! there's a fine pair of them! Look at the action of that roan! See how the fellow rises at the right moment without leaving his saddle! no jumping or bumping there!" Mr. Bartlett came on at a staving pace, lifting his hat to the ladies with perfect grace as he passed. He would have blushed could he have felt a single ripple of the wave of admiration which flowed after him. Bertha alone was silent, more than ever provoked and disgusted that such a gallant outward embodiment of manhood should

be connected with such disagreeable associations! Had he been any thing but a chiropodist! A singular feeling of shame, for his sake, prevented her from betraying his personality to her friends; and it came to pass that they innocently defended the very charlatan whom they had so ridiculed in the glen at Trenton from her half-disparaging observations.

After all, she thought, the man may be honest in his profession, which he may look upon as simply that of a physician. A pain in the toe is probably as troublesome as a pain in the head; and why should not one be cured as well as the other? A dentist, I am sure, is a very respectable person; and, for my part, I would as soon operate on a corny toe as a carious tooth. [I would not have you suppose, ladies, that Miss Morris made use of such horrid expressions in her conversation: I am only putting her thoughts into my own words.] Still, the conclusion to which she invariably arrived was, "I wish he were any thing else!"

That evening there was a hop at the hotel. The Morrises were enthusiastic dancers—even the widow, Bertha's mother, not disdaining a quadrille. Mr. Bartlett, in an elegant evening dress, his eyes sparkling with new light, was there also. In the course of the day he had encountered a Boston cousin, Miss Jane Heath, a tall, dashing girl, some two or three years older than himself. She was one of the few women with whom he felt entirely at ease. There was an honest, cousinly affection between them; and he always felt relieved, in society, when supported by her presence.

"Now, Harry," said Jane, as they entered the room, "remember, the first schottisch belongs to me. After that, I'll prove my disinterestedness by finding you partners."

As he led her upon the floor his eyes dropped in encountering those of Bertha Morris, whose floating tulle was just settling itself to rest as she whirled out of the ranks. Poor Bertha! had she been alone she could have cried. He danced as well as he rode—the splendid, mean fellow! the handsome, horrid—chiropodist! Well, it was all outward varnish, no doubt. If it was true that he had relieved the nobility of Great Britain of their corns, he must have ac-

quired something of the elegances of their society. But such ease and grace in dancing could not be picked up by mere imitation—it was a born gift. Even her brother Dick, who was looked upon as the highest result of fashionable education in such matters, was not surer or lighter of foot.

An hour later Bertha, who had withdrawn from the dancers and was refreshing herself with the mild night air at an open window, found herself temporarily separated from her friends. Mr. Bartlett had evidently been watching for such an opportunity, for he presently disengaged himself from the crowd and approached her.

"You are fond of dancing, Miss Morris?" said he.

"Ye-es," she answered, hesitatingly, divided between her determination to repel his effrontery and her inability to do so. She turned partly away, and gazed steadily into the moonshine.

Mr. Bartlett, however, was not to be discouraged. "Still, even the most agreeable exercise will fatigue at last," he remarked.

"Oh," said Bertha, rather sharply, suspecting a professional meaning in his words, "my feet are perfectly sound, I assure you, Sir!"

It is not to be denied that he was a little surprised at the earnestness of an assertion which, in a playful tone, would not have seemed out of place. "I think you proved that at Trenton Falls," he rejoined; "but will you grant me the pleasure of another test during the next quadrille?"

"No further test is necessary, Sir. I presume you have patients enough already!" And having uttered these words as coolly as her indignation allowed, Bertha moved away from the window.

"Patience?" said Mr. Bartlett to himself, wholly misapprehending her meaning; "yes, I shall have patience while there is a chance to hope. But why did she speak of patience? Women, I have heard, are natural diplomatists, and have a thousand indirect ways of saying things which they do not wish to speak outright. Could she mean to test the sincerity of my wish to know her. It is not to be expected that a stranger, so awkwardly introduced, should be received without hesitation—mistrust, perhaps. No, no, I must per-

severe; she would despise me if I did not understand her meaning."

The following days were cold and rainy. There was an end of the gay out-door life which offered him so many chances of meeting Miss Morris, and the fleeting glimpses he caught of her in the great dining-hall or the passage leading to the ladies' parlor were simply tantalizing. I have no doubt there was a mute appeal in his eyes which must have troubled the young lady's conscience; for she avoided meeting his gaze. The knowledge of his presence made her uneasy; there was an atmosphere about the hotel which she would willingly have escaped. She walked with the consciousness of an eye every where following her, and, in spite of herself, furtively sought for it. We, who are aware of her mystification, may be amused at it; but imagine yourselves in the same situation, ladies, and you will appreciate its horrors!

No, this was not longer to be endured, and so, after five or six days at Saratoga, the party suddenly left for Niagara. Bertha, an only daughter, was a petted child, and might have had her own way much oftener than was really the case. The principal use she made of her privilege was to follow the bent of a remarkably free, joyous, and confiding nature. She was just unconventional enough to preserve an individuality, and thereby distinguish herself from thousands of girls who seem to have been cut out by a single pattern. The sphere within which true womanhood moves is much wider than most women suspect. To the frank, honest, and pure nature, what are called "the bounds of propriety" are its natural horizon-ring, moving with it, and inclosing it every where without restraining its freedom.

We shall not be surprised to find that shortly after Miss Morris's departure Room No. 1346 in the Catanational Hotel had another tenant. Mr. Bartlett followed, as a matter of course. He began nevertheless, to feel very much like a fool, and—he afterward confessed—spent most of the time between Utica and the Suspension Bridge in deliberating whether he should seek or avoid an interview. As if such discussions with one's self ever amounted to any thing!

Ascertaining the lady's presence, he decided to devote

his first day to Niagara, trusting the rest to chance. In fact, he could not have done a more sensible thing, for there is a Special Chance appointed for such cases. The forenoon was not over before he experienced its operations. Bertha, cloaked and cowled in India-rubber, stood on the hurricane deck of the "Maid of the Mist," as the venturesome little steamer approached the corner of the Horse-Shoe Fall. Looking up through blinding spray at the shimmer of emerald and dazzling silver against the sky, she crept near a broad-shouldered figure to shelter herself from the stormy gusts of the Fall. Suddenly the boat wheeled, at the very edge of the tremendous sheet, and swirled away from the vortex with a heave which threw her off her feet. She did not fall, however; for strong arms caught her waist and steadied her until the motion subsided.

Through the rush of the spray and the roar of the Fall she indistinctly heard a voice apologizing for the unceremonious way in which the arms had seized her. She did not speak—fearful, in fact, of having her mouth filled with water —but frankly gave the gentleman her hand. The monkish figure bowed low over the wet fingers, and respectfully withdrew. As the mist cleared away she encountered familiar eyes. Was it possible? The Chiropodist!

This discovery gave Bertha no little uneasiness. A subtle instinct told her that he had followed on her account, in spite of her cornless feet. Perhaps he had left a lucrative practice at Saratoga—and why? There was but one answer to the question, and she blushed painfully as she admitted its possibility. What was to be done? She would tell her brother; but no—young men are so rash and violent. Avoid him? That was difficult and embarrassing. Ignore him? Yes, as much as possible, and, if necessary, frankly tell him that she could not accept his acquaintance. On the whole, this course seemed best, though an involuntary sympathy with her victim made her wish that it were all over.

In the afternoon Mrs. Morris, as usual, took her summer siesta; Dick had found a friend, and was whirling somewhere behind a pair of fast horses; and, finally, Bertha, bored by the society in the ladies' parlor, took her hat and a book and walked over to Goat Island. She made the circuit

of its forests and flashing water views, and finally selected a shady seat on its western side, whence she could look out on the foamy stairs of the Rapids. The unnecessary book lay in her lap; a more wonderful book than any printed volume lay open before her.

Who shall dare to interpret the day-dream of a maiden? Soothed by the mellow roar of the waters, fascinated by the momentary leaps of spray from the fluted, shell-shaped hollows of the descending waves, and freshened by the wind that blew from the cool Canadian shore, she nursed her wild weeds of fancy till they blossomed into brighter than garden-flowers. Meanwhile a thunder-cloud rose, dark and swift, in the west. The menaces of its coming were unheard, and Bertha was first recalled to consciousness by the sudden blast of cold wind that precedes the rain.

When she looked up, the gray depth of storm already arched high over the Canadian woods, and big drops began to rap on the shingly bank below her. A little further down was a summer-house—open to the west, it is true, but it offered the only chance of shelter within view. She had barely reached it before a heavy peal of thunder shattered the bolts of the rain, and it rushed down in an overwhelming flood. Mounted on the bench and crouched in the least exposed corner, she was endeavoring, with but partial success, to shelter herself from the driving flood, when a man, coming from the opposite end of the island, rushed up at full speed.

"Here," he panted, "Miss Morris, take this umbrella! I saw you at a distance, and made haste to reach you. I hope you're not wet." The spacious umbrella was instantly clapped over her, and the inevitable Chiropodist placed himself in front to steady it, fully exposed to the rain.

Bertha was not proof against this gallant self-sacrifice. In the surprise of the storm—the roar of which, mingled with that of the Fall, made a continuous awful peal—the companionship of any human being was a relief, and she felt grateful for Professor Hurlbut's arrival. Chiropodist though he was, he must not suffer for her sake.

"Here!" said she, lifting the umbrella, "it will shelter us both. Quick! I insist upon it:" seeing that he hesitated.

There was really no time for parley, for every drop pierced him to the skin, and the next moment found him planted before her, interposing a double shield. His tender anxiety for her sake quite softened Bertha. How ungrateful she had been!

"This is the second time I am obliged to you to-day, Sir," said she. "I am sorry that I have unintentionally given you trouble."

"Oh, Miss Morris," cried the delighted Bartlett, "don't mention it! It's nothing; I am quite amphibious, you know."

"You might be now in a place of shelter but for me," she answered, penitently.

"I'd rather be here than any where else!" he exclaimed, in a burst of candor which quite overleaped the barrier of self-possession and came down on the other side. "If you would allow me to be your friend, Miss Morris—if you would permit me to—to speak with you now and then; if—if—" Here he paused, not knowing precisely what more to say, yet feeling that he had already said enough to make his meaning clear.

Bertha was cruelly embarrassed, but only for a moment. Professor Hurlbut had at least been frank and honest in his avowal—she felt his sincerity through and through—and he deserved equal honesty at her hands.

"I am your debtor," said she, in an uncertain voice; "and you have a right to expect gratitude, at least, from me. I can not, therefore, refuse your acquaintance, though, as you know, your—your occupation would be considered objectionable by many persons."

"My occupation!"

"Your profession, then. I must candidly confess that I have a prejudice—a foolish one, perhaps, against it."

"My profession!" cried the astonished Bartlett; "why, I have none!"

"Well—it *is* scarcely to be called a 'profession,' but it is always liable to the charge of charlatanism: pardon me the word. And it may be ridiculed in so many ways. I wish, for your sake—for I believe you to be capable of better things—that you would adopt some other business."

Mr. Bartlett's amazement was now beyond all bounds.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed, "Miss Morris, what do you mean?"

Starting up from the bench as he uttered these words he jostled Bertha's book from her hand. The leaves parted in falling, and a large card, escaping from between them, fluttered down upon the floor. He picked it up and restored it to her, with the book.

"There!" she answered, giving the card back again, "there is what I mean! Must I give you your own card in order to acquaint you with your own business?"

Mr. Bartlett looked at it for a second in blank amazement; then, like a flash of lightning, the whole course of the misunderstanding flashed across his mind. He burst—I am ashamed to say—into a tremendous paroxysm of mingled tears and laughter: were he not so strong and masculine a man, I should say, "hysterics." In vain he struggled to find words. At every attempt a fresh convulsion of laughter seized him, and tears, mingled with rain, flowed down his cheeks.

Bertha began to be alarmed at this strange and unexpected convulsion. "Professor Hurlbut!" said she, "what is the matter?"

"Professor Hurlbut!" he repeated, in a faint, scarcely audible scream; then, striving to suppress his uncontrollable fit of delight and comical surprise, he sank upon the bench at her feet, shaking from head to foot with the effort.

"A-a-ah," he at last panted forth, as if heaving an atlas-load from his heart, and stood erect before her. With his face still flushed and eyes sparkling he was as handsome an embodiment of youth and life as one could wish to see. In two words he explained to her the mistake, on learning which Bertha blushed deeply, saying: "How could I ever have supposed it!" And then, reflecting upon the inferences which could be drawn from such an expression, became suddenly shy and silent.

Of course she accepted Mr. Bartlett's escort to the hotel when the rain was over, and he was presented to the agonized mother, who hailed him as a deliverer of her daughter from untold dangers, and privately remarked, afterward, to the latter: "Upon my word, a very nice young man, my dear!"

Dick's commendation was no less emphatic though differently expressed: "A good fellow! well made in the shoulders and flanks: fine action, but wants a little training!"

By this time, ladies, you have probably guessed the conclusion. My story would neither be agreeable nor true (I am relating facts) if they were not married, and did not have two children, and live happy ever after. Married they were, in the course of time, and happy they also are, for I visit them now and then.

One thing I had nearly forgotten. When Mrs. Bartlett chooses to tease her husband in that playful way so delightful to married lovers, she invariably calls him "Professor Hurlbut," while he retorts with "Miss Lawrence, of South Carolina." Moreover, in Mrs. B.'s confidential little boudoir, over her work-stand, hangs a neatly-framed card, whereon you may read:

PROFESSOR HURLBUT,

CHIROPODIST

To her Majesty Queen Victoria, and the Nobility of Great Britain.

MR. DOOLEY ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

BY F. P. DUNNE

MR. DOOLEY ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

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"WELL, sir," said Mr. Dooley, "I see that some school-teachers down East have been petitioning to be allowed to slug th' young."

"How's that?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"Well," said Mr. Dooley "they say they can't do anything with these tender little growths onless they use a club. They want the boord iv iddycation to restore what's called corporal punishment—that is th' fun iv lickin' some wan that can't fight back. Says wan iv thim: 'Th' little wans undher our care are far fr'm bein' th' small angels that they look. As a matther iv fact they are rebellyous monsthers that must be suppressed be vigorous an',' says he, 'stern measures. Is it right,' says he, 'that us school masthers shud daily risk our lives at th' hands iv these feerocious an' tigerish inimies iv human s'ciety without havin' a chance to pound thim? Yisterdah a goolden haired imp iv perdition placed a tack in me chair. To-day I found a dead rat in the desk. At times they write opprobyous epithets about me on th' blackboard; at other times crood but pinted carrycachures. Nawthin' will conthrol thim. They hurl the murdherous spitball. They pull th' braid iv th' little girl. They fire baseballs through th' windows. Sometimes lumps iv chewin' gum are found undher their desks where they have stuck thim f'r further use. They shuffle their feet whin I'm narvous. They look around thim when they think I'm not lookin'. They pass notes grossly insultin' each other. Moral suasion does no good. I have thried writin' to their parents askin' thim to cripple their offspring, an' th' parents have come over an' offered to fight me. I've thried keepin' thim afther school, makin' thim write compositions an' shakin' th' milk teeth out iv thim,

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but to no avail. Me opinyon is that th' av'rage small boy is a threecherous, dangerous crather like th' Apachy Indyan an' that th' on'y thing to do with him is to slam him with a wagon spoke,' says he.

"An th' boord iv iddycation is discussin' th' petition. It can't quite make up its mind whether Solomon wasn't right. Solomon said, accordin' to Hogan, spile th' rod an' save th' child. He must've had a large fam'ly if he was annywhere near Tiddy Rosenfelt's law iv av'rages. I don't see how he cud've spared time f'r writin' from correctin' his fam'ly. He must've set up nights. Annyhow, th' boord iv iddycation is discussin' whether he was right or not. I don't know mys'lf. All I know is that if I was a life insurance canvasser or a coal dealer or something else that made me illegible to be a mimber iv a boord iv iddycation, an' an able-bodied man six feet tall come to me f'r permission to whale a boy three feet tall, I'd say: 'I don't know whether ye are compitint. Punishing people requires special thrainin'. It ain't iv'rybody that's suited f'r th' job. Ye might bungle it. Just take off ye'er coat an' vest an' step into th' next room an' be examined.' An' in th' next room th' ambitious iddycator wud find James J. Jeffreys or some other akely efficient expert ready f'r him an' if he come back alive he'd have a certy-ficate entitlin' him to whack anny little boy he met—except mine.

"Sure there'd be very few people to say they believed in corporal punishment if corporal punishment was gin'ral. I wudden't give anny wan th' right to lick a child that wanted to lick a child. No wan shud be licked till he's too old to take a licking. If it's right to larrup an infant iv eight, why ain't it right to larrup wan iv eighteen? Supposin' Prisidint Hadley iv Yale see that th' left tackle or th' half back iv th' football team wasn't behavin' right. He'd been caught blowin' a pea shooter at th' pro-fissor iv iliminthry chemisthry, or pullin' th' dure bell iv th' pro-fissor iv dogmatic theosophy. He don't know any diff'rent. He's not supposed to ralize th' distinction between right an' wrong yet. Does Prisidint Hadley grab th' child be th' ear an' conduct him to a corner iv th' schoolroom an' wallup him? Ye bet he does not. Prisidint Hadley may be a bold man in raisin'

money or thranslatin' Homer, but he knows th' diff'rence between courage and sheer recklessness. If he thried to convince this young idea how to shoot in this careless way ye'd read in the pa-apers that th' fire department was thrying to rescue Prisidint Hadley fr'm th' roof iv th' buildin' but he declined to come down.

"But what wud ye do with a child that refused to obey ye?" demanded Mr. Hennessy.

"Not bein' ayther a parent or an iddycator I nivir had such a child," said Mr. Dooley. "I don't know what I'd do if I was. Th' on'y thing I wudden't do wud be to hit him if he cudden't hit back, an' thin I'd think twice about it. Th' older I grow th' more things there are I know I don't know annything about. An' wan iv thim is childher. I can't figure thim out at all.

"What d'ye know about thim little wans that ye have so carefully reared be lavin' thim in th' mornin' befure they got up an' losin' ye'er temper with at night whin ye come home fr'm wurruk? They don't know ye an' ye don't know thim. Ye'll niver know till 'tis too late. I've often wondhered what a little boy thinks about us that call oursilves grown up because we can't grow anny more. We wake him up in th' mornin' whin he wants to sleep. We make him wash his face whin he knows it don't need washin' thin as much as it will later an' we sind him back to comb his hair in a way he don't approve iv at all. We fire him off to school just about th' time iv day whin anny wan ought to be out iv dures. He trudges off to a brick buildin' an' a tired teacher tells him a lot iv things he hasn't anny inthrest in at all, like how manny times sivin goes into a hundhred an' nine an' who was King iv England in thirteen twinty-two an' where is Kazabazoo on the map. He has to set there most iv th' pleasant part iv th' day with sixty other kids an' ivry time he thries to do annything that seems right to him like jabbin' a frind with a pin or carvin' his name on the desk, th' sthrange lady or gintleman that acts as his keeper swoops down on him an' makes him feel like a criminal. To'rds evenin' if he's been good an' repressed all his nacharal instincts he's allowed to go home an' chop some wood. Whin he's done that an' has just managed to get a few iv his

frinds together an' they're beginnin' to get up inthrest in th' spoort iv throwin' bricks down into a Chinese laundhry his little sister comes out an' tells him he's wanted at home. He instinctively pulls her hair an' goes in to study his lessons so that he'll be able to-morrow to answer some ridiklous questions that are goin' to be asked him. Afther a while ye come home an' greet him with ye'er usual glare an' ye have supper together. Ye do most iv th' talkin', which ain't much. If he thries to cut in with somethin' that intelligent people ought to talk about ye stop him with a frown. Afther supper he's allowed to study some more, an' whin he's finished just as th' night begins to look good he's fired off to bed an' th' light is taken away fr'm him an' he sees ghosts an' hobgoberlins in th' dark an' th' next he knows he's hauled out iv bed an' made to wash his face again.

"An' so it goes. If he don't do anny iv these things or if he doesn't do thim th' way ye think is th' right way some wan hits him or wants to. Talk about happy childhood. How wud ye like to have twinty or thirty people issuin' foolish ordhers to ye, makin' ye do things ye didn't want to do, an' niver undherstandin' at all why it was so? 'Tis like livin' on this earth an' bein' ruled by the inhabitants iv Mars. He has his wurruld, ye can bet on that, an' 'tis a mighty important wurruld. Who knows why a kid wud rather ate potatoes cooked nice an' black on a fire made of sthraw an' old boots thin th' delicious oatmeal so carefully an' so often prepared f'r him be his kind parents? Who knows why he thinks a dark hole undher a sidewalk is a robbers' cave? Who knows why he likes to collect in wan pocket a ball iv twine, glass marbles, chewin' gum, a dead sparrow an' half a lemon? Who knows what his seasons are? They are not mine, an' they're not ye'ers, but he goes as reg'lar fr'm top time to marble time an' fr'm marble time to kite time as we go fr'm summer to autumn an' autumn to winter. To-day he's thryin' to annihilate another boy's stick top with his; to-morrow he's thrying to sail a kite out iv a tillygraft wire. Who knows why he does it?

"Faith we know nawthin' about him an' he knows nawthin' about us. I can raymimber whin I was a little boy

but I can't raymimber how I was a little boy. I call back as though it was yisterdah th' things I did, but why I did thim I don't know. Faith, if I cud look for'ard to th' things I've done I cud no more aisily explain why I was goin' to do thim. Maybe we're both wrong in the way we look at each other—us an' th' childher. We think we've grown up an' they don't guess that we're childher. If they knew us betther they'd not be so surprised at our actions an' wudden't foorce us to hit thim. Whin ye issued some foolish ordher to ye'er little boy he'd say: 'Pah-pah is fractious to-day. Don't ye think he ought to have some castor ile?' "

"It's a wise child that knows his own father," said Mr. Hennessy.

"It's a happy child that doesn't," said Mr. Dooley.

OVER A WOOD FIRE

BY DONALD G. MITCHELL

"IK MARVEL"

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I HAVE got a quiet farmhouse in the country, a very humble place, to be sure, tenanted by a worthy enough man of the old New England stamp, where I sometimes go for a day or two in the winter, to look over the farm accounts and to see how the stock is thriving on the winter's keep.

One side the door, as you enter from the porch, is a little parlor, scarce twelve feet by ten, with a cozy-looking fireplace, a heavy oak floor, a couple of armchairs, and a brown table with carved lions' feet. Out of this room opens a little cabinet, only big enough for a broad bachelor bedstead, where I sleep upon feathers, and wake in the morning with my eye upon a saucy colored lithographic print of some fancy "Bessy."

It happens to be the only house in the world of which I am *bona fide* owner, and I take a vast deal of comfort in treating it just as I choose. I manage to break some article of furniture almost every time I pay it a visit; and if I cannot open the window readily of a morning, to breathe the fresh air, I knock out a pane or two of glass with my boot. I lean against the walls in a very old armchair there on the premises, and scarce ever fail to worry such a hole in the plastering as would set me down for a round charge for damages in town, or make a prim housewife fret herself into a raging fever. I laugh out loud with myself, in my big armchair, when I think that I am neither afraid of one nor the other. As for the fire, I keep the little hearth so hot as to warm half the cellar below, and the whole space between the jams roars for two hours together with white flame. To be sure, the windows are not very tight, between broken panes and bad joints, so that the fire, large as it is, is by no means an extravagant comfort.

As night approaches, I have a huge pile of oak and hickory

placed beside the hearth; I put out the tallow candle on the mantel (using the family snuffers, with one leg broken), then, drawing my chair directly in front of the blazing wood, and setting one foot on each of the old iron fire-dogs (until they grow too warm), I dispose myself for an evening of such sober and thoughtful quietude as I believe, on my soul, that very few of my fellow men have the good fortune to enjoy.

My tenant, meantime, in the other room, I can hear now and then—though there is a thick stone chimney, and broad entry between—multiplying contrivances with his wife to put two babies to sleep. This occupies them, I should say, usually an hour, though my only measure of time (for I never carry a watch into the country) is the blaze of my fire. By ten, or thereabouts, my stock of wood is nearly exhausted; I pile upon the hot coals what remains, and sit watching how it kindles, and blazes, and goes out—even like our joys—and then slip by the light of the embers into my bed, where I luxuriate in such sound and healthful slumber as only such rattling window-frames and country air can supply.

But to return: the other evening—it happened to be on my last visit to my farmhouse—when I had exhausted all the ordinary rural topics of thought, had formed all sorts of conjectures as to the income of the year; had planned a new wall around one lot, and the clearing up of another, now covered with patriarchal wood; and wondered if the little rickety house would not be after all a snug enough box to live and to die in—I fell on a sudden into such an unprecedented line of thought, which took such deep hold of my sympathies —sometimes even starting tears—that I determined, the next day, to set as much of it as I could recall on paper.

Something—it may have been the home-looking blaze (I am a bachelor of, say, six-and-twenty), or possibly a plaintive cry of the baby in my tenant's room, had suggested to me the thought of—marriage.

I piled upon the heated fire-dogs the last armful of my wood; "and now," said I, bracing myself courageously between the arms of my chair, "I'll not flinch; I'll pursue the thought wherever it leads, though it leads me to the d— (I am apt to be hasty)—at least," continued I, softening, "until my fire is out."

The wood was green, and at first showed no disposition to blaze. It smoked furiously. Smoke, thought I, always goes before blaze; and so does doubt go before decision: and my reverie, from that very starting-point, slipped into this shape:

I. SMOKE—SIGNIFYING DOUBT

A wife? thought I. Yes, a wife.

And why?

And pray, my dear sir, why not—why? Why not doubt? why not hesitate; why not tremble?

Does a man buy a ticket in a lottery—a poor man whose whole earnings go in to secure the ticket—without trembling, hesitating, and doubting?

Can a man stake his bachelor respectability, his independence, and comfort, upon the die of absorbing, unchanging, relentless marriage, without trembling at the venture?

Shall a man who has been free to chase his fancies over the wide world, without let or hindrance, shut himself up to marriage-ship, within four walls called home, that are to claim him, his time, his trouble, and his tears, thenceforward forevermore, without doubts thick, and thick-coming as smoke?

Shall he who has been hitherto a mere observer of other men's cares and business—moving off where they made him sick of heart, approaching whenever and wherever they made him gleeful—shall he now undertake administration of just such cares and business, without qualms? Shall he, whose whole life has been but a nimble succession of escapes from trifling difficulties, now broach without doubtings—that matrimony, where if difficulty beset him there is no escape? Shall this brain of mine—careless-working, never tired with idleness, feeding on long vagaries and high, gigantic castles, dreaming out beatitudes hour by hour—turn itself at length to such dull task-work as thinking out a livelihood for wife and children?

Where thenceforward will be those sunny dreams, in which I have warmed my fancies, and my heart, and lighted my eye with crystal? This very marriage, which a brilliant

working imagination has invested time and again with brightness and delight, can serve no longer as a mine for teeming fancy. All, alas! will be gone—reduced to the dull standard of the actual. No more room for intrepid forays of imagination—no more gorgeous realm-making. All will be over!

Why not, I thought, go on dreaming?

Can any wife be prettier than an after-dinner fancy, idle and yet vivid, can paint for you? Can any children make less noise than the little rosy-cheeked ones who have no existence except in the omnium gatherum of your own brain? Can any housewife be more unexceptionable than she who goes sweeping daintily the cobwebs that gather in your dreams? Can any domestic larder be better stocked than the private larder of your head dozing on a cushioned chair-back at Delmonico's? Can any family purse be better filled than the exceeding plump one you dream of, after reading such pleasant books as Munchausen or Typee?

But if, after all, it must be—duty, or what-not, making provocation—what then? And I clapped my feet hard against the fire-dogs, and leaned back, and turned my face to the ceiling, as much as to say, And where on earth, then, shall a poor devil look for a wife?

Somebody says—Lyttleton or Shaftesbury, I think—that "marriages would be happier if they were all arranged by the Lord Chancellor." Unfortunately, we have no Lord Chancellor to make this commutation of our misery.

Shall a man then scour the country on a mule's back, like honest Gil Blas of Santillane? or shall he make application to some such intervening providence as Madame St. Marc, who, as I see by the Presse, manages these matters to one's hand, for some five per cent on the fortunes of the parties?

I have trouted when the brook was so low and the sky so hot that I might as well have thrown my fly upon the turnpike; and I have hunted hare at noon, and woodcock in snowtime—never despairing, scarce doubting; but for a poor hunter of his kind, without traps or snares, or any aid of police or constabulary, to traverse the world, where are swarming, on a moderate computation, some three hundred and odd millions of unmarried women, for a single capture —irremediable, unchangeable—and yet a capture which by

strange metonymy, not laid down in the books, is very apt to turn captor into captive and make game of hunter—all this, surely, surely may make a man shrug with doubt!

Then, again, there are the plaguy wife's relations. Who knows how many third, fourth, or fifth cousins will appear at careless complimentary intervals long after you had settled into the placid belief that all congratulatory visits were at an end? How many twisted-headed brothers will be putting in their advice, as a friend to Peggy?

How many maiden aunts will come to spend a month or two with their "dear Peggy," and want to know every tea-time "if she isn't a dear love of a wife?" Then, dear father-in-law will beg (taking dear Peggy's hand in his) to give a little wholesome counsel; and will be very sure to advise just the contrary of what you had determined to undertake. And dear mamma-in-law must set her nose into Peggy's cupboard, and insist upon having the key to your own private locker in the wainscot.

Then, perhaps, there is a little bevy of dirty-nosed nephews who come to spend the holidays, and eat up your East India sweetmeats; and who are forever tramping over your head or raising the old Harry below, while you are busy with your clients. Last, and worse, is some fidgety old uncle, forever too cold or too hot, who vexes you with his patronizing airs, and impudently kisses his little Peggy!

That could be borne, however; for perhaps he has promised his fortune to Peggy. Peggy, then, will be rich (and the thought made me rub my shins, which were now getting comfortably warm upon the fire-dogs). Then she will be forever talking of *her* fortune; and pleasantly reminding you, on occasion of a favorite purchase, how lucky that *she* had the means; and dropping hints about economy; and buying very extravagant Paisleys.

She will annoy you by looking over the stock-list at breakfast-time, and mention quite carelessly to your clients that she is interested in *such* or such a speculation.

She will be provokingly silent when you hint to a tradesman that you have not the money by you for his small bill—in short, she will tear the life out of you, making you pay in righteous retribution of annoyance, grief, vexation,

shame, and sickness of heart, for the superlative folly of "marrying rich."

But if not rich, then poor. Bah! the thought made me stir the coals; but there was still no blaze. The paltry earnings you are able to wring out of clients by the sweat of your brow will now be all *our* income; you will be pestered for pin-money, and pestered with your poor wife's relations. Ten to one, she will stickle about taste—"Sir Visto's"—and want to make this so pretty, and that so charming, if she *only* had the means; and is sure Paul (a kiss) can't deny his little Peggy such a trifling sum, and all for the common benefit.

Then she, for one, means that *her* children sha'n't go a-begging for clothes—and another pull at the purse. Trust a poor mother to dress her children in finery!

Perhaps she is ugly—not noticeable at first, but growing on her, and (what is worse) growing faster on you. You wonder why you didn't see that vulgar nose long ago; and that lip—it is very strange, you think, that you ever thought it pretty. And then, to come to breakfast with her hair looking as it does, and you not so much as daring to say, "Peggy, *do* brush your hair!" Her foot, too—not very bad when decently *chausse;* but now since she's married she does wear such infernal slippers! And yet for all this, to be prigging up for an hour, when any of my old chums come to dine with me!

"Bless your kind hearts, my dear fellows," said I, thrusting the tongs into the coals and speaking out loud, as if my voice could reach from Virginia to Paris, "not married yet!"

Perhaps Peggy is pretty enough, only shrewish.

No matter for cold coffee; you should have been up before.

What sad, thin, poorly cooked chops, to eat with your rolls!

She thinks they are very good, and wonders how you can set such an example to your children.

The butter is nauseating.

She has no other, and hopes you'll not raise a storm about butter a little turned. I think I see myself, ruminated I,

sitting meekly at table, scarce daring to lift up my eyes, utterly fagged out with some quarrel of yesterday, choking down detestably sour muffins, that my wife thinks are "delicious"—slipping in dried mouthfuls of burnt ham off the side of my forktines—slipping off my chair sideways at the end, and slipping out with my hat between my knees, to business, and never feeling myself a competent, sound-minded man till the oak door is between me and Peggy.

"Ha-ha! not yet!" said I, and in so earnest a tone that my dog started to his feet, cocked his eye to have a good look into my face, met my smile of triumph with an amiable wag of the tail, and curled up again in the corner.

Again, Peggy is rich enough, well enough, mild enough, only she doesn't care a fig for you. She has married you because father or grandfather thought the match eligible, and because she didn't wish to disoblige them. Besides, she didn't positively hate you, and thought you were a respectable enough young person; she has told you so repeatedly at dinner. She wonders you like to read poetry; she wishes you would buy her a good cook-book; and insists upon your making your will at the birth of the first baby.

She thinks Captain So-and-So a splendid-looking fellow, and wishes you would trim up a little, were it only for appearance' sake.

You need not hurry up from the office so early at night, she, bless her dear heart! does not feel lonely. You read to her a love tale: she interrupts the pathetic parts with directions to her seamstress. You read of marriages: she sighs, and asks if Captain So-and-So has left town. She hates to be mewed up in a cottage, or between brick walls; she does *so* love the Springs!

But, again, Peggy loves you—at least she swears it, with her hand on "The Sorrows of Werter." She has pin-money which she spends for the "Literary World" and the "Friends in Council." She is not bad-looking, save a bit too much of forehead; nor is she sluttish, unless a *negligé* till three o'clock, and an ink-stain on the forefinger be sluttish; but then she is such a sad blue!

You never fancied, when you saw her buried in a three-volume novel, that it was anything more than a girlish

vagary; and when she quoted Latin, you thought innocently that she had a capital memory for her samplers.

But to be bored eternally about divine Dante and funny Goldoni is too bad. Your copy of Tasso, a treasure print of 1680, is all bethumbed and dog's-eared, and spotted with baby gruel. Even your Seneca—an Elzevir—is all sweaty with handling. She adores La Fontaine, reads Balzac with a kind of artist scowl, and will not let Greek alone.

You hint at broken rest and an aching head at breakfast, and she will fling you a scrap of Anthology—in lieu of the camphor-bottle—or chant the *aἰaῖ aἰaῖ* of tragic chorus.

The nurse is getting dinner; you are holding the baby; Peggy is reading Bruyère.

The fire smoked thick as pitch, and puffed out little clouds over the chimney-piece. I gave the fore-stick a kick; at the thought of Peggy, baby, and Bruyère.

Suddenly the flame flickered bluely athwart the smoke—caught at a twig below—rolled round the mossy oak-stick—twined among the crackling tree-limbs—mounted—lit up the whole body of smoke, and blazed out cheerily and bright. Doubt vanished with smoke, and hope began with flame.

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